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....Pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children. ....
—Lamentations 2. 19.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY.

"An Open Air Meeting Every Week for Every Church!" is the summer slogan of the Chicago Federation of Churches.

The library of the Theological School in Harvard University is said to contain more than 2000 volumes dealing with the life and letters of the apostle Paul. That is more than one for each year since he lived and died, and does not include commentaries and histories in which Paul and his writings also have an important place.

According to the Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce there is a 7 per cent drop in the number of **English-speaking foreign-born white persons in New York City** since 1910.

The leading mother tongues represented in the foreign-born white people of New York City are as follows:

Yiddish and Hebrew, 946,139; English and Celtic, 897,452; Italian, 803,048; German, 690,789; Russian, 221,153; Polish, 161,310.

This shows that Yiddish and Hebrew are spoken more than any other foreign language in New York.

In keeping with the nation-wide sentiment for a quickened interest in the fundamentals of religion, **a representative board of chaplains of the army** of the United States met at Washington in June to devise ways for magnifying the place of religion in the army, to consider plans for a more intensive program of moral training for soldiers, to develop community contacts, and to recommend those activities which will strengthen the religious program for regular army posts and stations, and safeguard young men who enter the various training camps.

A limited number of men prominent in their respective denominations and organizations, and who have shown special interest in the development of the religious life of the army, also met with the board of officers to counsel on this very important matter.

Last year the government moved all the lepers in the United States to a single segregated camp in the South. That meant, among other changes, the breaking up of the famous leper colony on Penikese Island, off the southern coast of Massachusetts.

For fifteen years a devoted doctor, in the service of the public health, had lived on that island, caring for his little group of lepers. A priest went to that colony just before it was moved, to give religious ministrations to one of the sufferers. He asked the leper whether he believed in God, and the man answered:

"Yes, I believe in God, but **I believe in Doctor Perkins first.**"

Through their Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations representing them in the World's Student Christian Federation, students of America are again providing funds for aiding thousands of their unfortunate fellow students in Russia, Central Europe, and the Near East. Up to April, 514 schools and colleges had given to the current year's **Student Friendship Fund,** and from outside sources $183,547

had been received. Besides these amounts, representatives of the Fund are administering in Russia a gift of $50,000 from Jewish students in America, given through the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, and $10,000 given by the Baptists. Thirty thousand students in Russia are cared for, and many hundreds in Central Europe and the Near East are finishing their year's work because of the generosity of students in thirty-five different countries.

John McEntee Bowman, proprietor of the Biltmore, Commodore, and Belmont hotels, New York City, and of other hotels throughout the country known as the Bowman group, has announced that **chapels for prayer and meditation** will be established in all the hotels with which he is connected.

Explaining his purpose, Mr. Bowman says: "We have already engaged the Gorham Company, New York, to make suitable designs. The chapels will vary in size according to the needs of the different hotels. Each one will contain a beautiful stained-glass window, to suggest sacredness. There will also be an altar, cathedral chairs, and appropriate lighting. It is the intention always to keep fresh flowers on the altars. The doors will be open day and night as a perpetual invitation to enter for those who desire to meditate and pray. Although these chapels will be consecrated, they are not intended for set services, though services may be held on special occasions. They are intended for the use of all denominations, and will be absolutely non-sectarian."

The Disciples of Christ in the South are divided on the question of **the use of instruments in church music.**

In mid-Tennessee and other parts the anti-organ people are in a majority. Some churches have made the instrument not only a test of fellowship, but a matter of credal statement, incorporating it into the deeds of church property, forever barring the instrument and those who favor its use. Hitherto the other side has kept silent and tried to preserve fraternal relations.

An issue was made in Nashville last year at a revival meeting, when a donation of $300 toward expenses from an organ-using church was returned with the statement that the church was a separate people, believing and teaching different things. This meeting was followed by a challenge to debate the statement, "Instrumental music in the church is Scriptural, or Scripturally permissible," but the parties could not agree on a debate.

That **the Negro in America** is in every way a hundred years ahead of the native of South Africa is the statement of Dr. James Henderson, a noted educator from that country, who is spending a few months in America in the study of race relations and Negro education. This is due, he said, to the fact that the American Negro came much earlier into contact with Christian civilization, and has had far greater opportunities for education and self-development. He was particularly impressed with the economic progress which the race has made in this country, which he said was far beyond anything he had expected.

Dr. Henderson has given his life to the education of the natives of British South Africa, having been for many years principal of Lovedale Institute, the great African Tuskegee, a missionary institution with a faculty of 60 and a student body of 900. He has visited a number of Negro colleges, and was greatly pleased with them, commenting most favorably on their fine equipment, competent and devoted teachers, and intelligent students. A number of well-trained American Negroes, he said, are rendering fine service in Africa as teachers and social workers. Wherever they have been tried they have made good, was his emphatic testimony. He believes that the number of such workers will greatly increase, and that in this way the educated American Negro is destined to make a great contribution to Africa's development.

A Word of Warning.

A worthwhile note of warning was sounded by Percy Hammond in the "New York Tribune" in connection with the recent observance of Boys' Week; and the warning is equally applicable to other uplift movements among young people.

"Reading yesterday of the New York boys who pretended to act as mayor, to be president of the Stock Exchange, and to

run the Hotel McAlpin for a couple of hours, one wonders whether or not they were benefited by the experience," he says.

"After all, the whole thing may have been rather a false front, a sentimental gesture, accompanied by winks and nudges, and a bit harmful because it was a bit artificial. Fine youngsters they appeared to be as they sat in front of the cameras looking conscious and lensward, and naturally hopeful that their pictures would get into the newspapers. What will be the effect of Boys' Week on these children? Will it instruct them in the values of buncombe and counterfeit? Will it teach them to be shallow poseurs, ambitious to be photographed while shaking hands or signing documents, thinking of nothing but publicity? Or will they be inspired by Boys' Week to be selflessly up and doing, in the belief that they may become good citizens without having to lead parades?

"Many good and charitable movements are founded upon the passion of their engineers for vain, but otherwise unselfish, advertisement, as the late Mr. Fish observed when writing his will. Thousands of more or less empty European stomachs have been filled and much devastation repaired through American yearning for decorations and renown, if not for notoriety. So, if Eddie and Harry and Culver and Joseph are impelled to well-doing by a billboard and a placard appetite, Boys' Week will be a helpful instrument, for others if not for themselves."

America's Example.

The World League against Alcoholism has published a pamphlet entitled "Hold Fast, America!" by Gifford Gordon of Melbourne, Australia. Mr. Gordon came to this country in 1921 as the accredited representative of the Victorian Anti-Liquor League for the purpose of studying the Prohibition law.

In Australia the liquor problem is as serious as it was in America four years ago. Australia's drink bill in 1920-21 amounted to $147,000,000, and was $47,000,000 more than that of 1917-18. Thinking men in Australia realize that a nation of five million people cannot afford to waste such enormous sums in the face of a colossal war debt.

After a year's investigation, during which he has visited all sorts of cities and communities in a circuit of over 25,000 miles, Mr. Gordon is convinced that prohibition has succeeded.

"I did not come to America to find out whether Prohibition absolutely prohibited. I knew that it did not. No one expected that it would. I came to find out if Prohibition, in the face of tremendous handicaps, had justified itself. I wanted to know if it had decreased drunkenness, reduced crime, improved living conditions, encouraged industry, helped the submerged classes, and been a blessing to the great mass of the people.

"After a year's careful investigation I can assert that it has done all of these things,—perhaps not in full measure, but certainly to the extent that it has overwhelmingly justified the enactment of the anti-liquor constitutional amendment."

The pamphlet summarizes his findings, and asserts that prohibition has not had a fair deal before the law and public opinion.

The exhortation of the title is due to his belief that the success of America will strengthen the movement against alcohol in all lands.

The Rockefeller Foundation.

A statement of the program and contributions made by the Rockefeller Foundation during the ten years since it was chartered has just been issued, and reveals the large and well directed benefactions of that great philanthropy.

While the chartered purpose is broadly stated as "the well-being of mankind throughout the world," the work of the Foundation has become chiefly centered upon public health and medical education.

The expenditures during the first decade, 1913 through 1922, have amounted to seventy-six and three quarters millions ($76,757,040), roughly divided as follows:

Public health	$18,188,838
Medical education	24,716,859
War relief	22,298,541
All other philanthropic work	10,445,628
Administration	1,107,174

The International Health Board, established as a department of the Foundation in 1913, has sought to promote public health throughout the world by demonstrating the methods and costs of controlling certain diseases, notably hookworm disease, malaria, and yellow fever; by fostering the growth of governmental health agencies; and by encouraging the formation of schools of hygiene. In carrying out this program the Board has coöperated with twenty-seven American states and fifty foreign governments. Its annual expenditures have increased from $133,237 in 1914 to $1,842,249 in 1922.

In medical education a special feature has been the work of the China Medical Board, in building, equipping, and maintaining a modern medical center in Peking. The Board has made appropriations to other medical schools and to thirty-two hospitals, as well as to the fostering of science education in China.

Substantial contributions have been made in recent years to centers of medical teaching in London and Brussels. The Foundation has also coöperated in the development of medical education in North and South America, Western and Central Europe, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Bangkok.

BIBLE INTELLIGENCE TEST.

The intelligence tests proposed by Mr. Edison and others suggested a similar test of Bible knowledge to the editor of the "Epworth Herald." He proposed to Epworth Leaguers that they should answer a number of simple questions about the contents of the Bible without preparation.

First, the names of Biblical characters. Identify and place the following: Abner, Barnabas, Caiaphas, Deborah, Enoch, Festus, Gideon, Hiram, Ishmael, Jephthah, Keturah, Levi, Methuselah, Naomi, Onesimus, Pharaoh, Reuben, Samuel, Timothy, Uriah.

Or take a group of incidental literary allusions, selected from the small change of novelists, essayists, poets, and the general run of conversation. Where in the Bible is the original of these references? Never mind chapter and verse; just give the connection. "Abraham's bosom," "Agur's wish," "the apple of the eye," "the Babylonish garment," "drawing his bow at a venture," "the potter's field," "bricks without straw," "coals of fire," "like Noah's dove," "wheels within wheels," "Armageddon," "spying out the land," "spoiling the Egyptians," "slaughter of the innocents," "the widow's cruse," "flowing with milk and honey," "the second mile," "wars and rumors of wars," "hiding one's light under a bushel," "bread upon the waters."

The Bible has had a profound influence on English literature and speech, and its very words are often taken without our realizing that we are using Scriptural material. Give the Biblical origin of the following titles of stories and poems: "The Inside of the Cup," "Back to Methuselah," "A Certain Rich Man," "The House of Rimmon," "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," "Jephthah's Daughter," "The Destruction of Sennacherib," "Paradise Lost," "The Sons of Martha," "The Appeal to Cæsar," "Tarry Thou Till I Come," "The Other Wise Man," "Belshazzar's Feast," "Figs and Thistles," "Samson and Delilah," "The Jericho Road," "Saul," "The Widow's Mite," "The House of Bondage," "A Bill of Divorcement."

So with familiar hymns. We have sung them so often that we do not need a book, but do we know, always, where the hymn writers got their ideas, their figures of speech, their pictures of life, death, and the life to come? Where in the Bible do the originals of these references occur? "Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down," "Shall we gather at the river?" "Rock of ages," "Could we but climb where Moses stood," "All people that on earth do dwell," "Thou of life the fountain art," "And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing," "We touch him in life's throng and press," "The spacious firmament on high," "Bread of heaven, feed me, till I want no more," "Some day the silver cord will break," "Will there be any stars in my crown?" "The half has never yet been told," "Almost persuaded, now to believe," "Here I'll raise my Ebenezer," "The year of jubilee is come," "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," "Hark! the herald angels sing," "The ninety and nine," "Jerusalem the golden."

OTHER LANDS.

The children of the new settlers in Palestine speak **Hebrew as their mother tongue.**

"Sabhtha (Granny)," said the three-year old scion of a pioneer family, "dab-baree 'Ibbrith (speak Hebrew)!"

A merchant in Londonderry, North Ireland, recently received an anonymous letter containing banknotes for a hundred pounds with this statement:

"Robbed from you some years ago, now returned with interest."

This is one of many **acts of restitution** following in the wake of great revival interest during the past two winters, in which Rev. W. P. Nicholson has been a leading evangelist. The interest has been so great as to recall the widespread revival of 1859.

The evangelical churches in Europe, which have recently established, with the aid and coöperation of the American churches, a central bureau as a clearing-house in all matters of relief, have sent over the secretary, Dr. Adolph Keller of Zurich, Switzerland, to bring to the attention of American Protestants the present condition of the Protestant churches of continental Europe. No man knows better than he the situation in Europe as a whole.

Concerning the present conditions there Dr. Keller declares:

"We appeal to the heart and conscience of the whole evangelical world to come to the rescue. Our fellow believers are suffering sore distress in many countries in Europe where Protestantism is struggling. Many institutions, schools and charitable organizations are threatened with extinction, or are in danger of passing into other hands, whether secular or Roman Catholic. Thousands of professional men, clergymen and their families, widows of clergy and retired pastors, are plunged in great straits. Many of the Protestant institutions necessary to the life of the church, such as home missions, missionary work or the church press, are ruined or going to cease for lack of funds.

"This widespread and heavy affliction concerns the whole evangelical world. European Protestantism, as a whole, is at present confronted with one of the greatest dangers in its history."

Dr. Adolph Keller.

Dr. Keller arrived in New York the end of April, and returns home this month. His itinerary has taken him to the Pacific Coast. His headquarters are care of the Federal Council, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.

Rural Protestant Depopulation in France.

In its session of 1921 the national synod of Reformed Evangelical Churches in France decided to investigate the movement of the Protestant population. The inquiry was intended to establish not only the number of Protestants in each parish, but also the number of families and the average number of children in each.

The inquiry was made in 1922. Few churches in the larger towns returned the questionnaire, but the answers from 129 rural churches reveal unpleasant facts, as told in "Le Christianisme au XXe Siècle."

These 129 rural churches comprised 49,-431 Protestants: 13,911 men, 17,405 women, and 15,213 young people under 21. They represented 12,206 families, of which 1949 were without children or never had any, 3282 had one child, 3099 two children, 1873

three children, 1002 four children, and 1001 more than four. 10,257 families had 24,495 children, or an average of 2½ each.

Of 1283 marriages in 1920 and 1921 in these 129 churches only 529 children were born up to March 1, 1922. One church reported 40 deaths against 12 baptisms and 10 marriages in 1921. In another parish 1200 Protestants in 1825 had diminished to 720 in 1910, and fell to 519 in 1922. A third parish revealed 400 baptisms and 600 burials since 1881.

The conclusion is evident that emigration to the cities cannot be altogether blamed for the depopulation of rural parishes: fewer marriages and smaller families accentuate the painful result.

REACHING THE WORLD'S BOYS.

"The most remarkable generation of boys this world has ever known is the one coming forward right before our eyes in these momentous years," says Dr. John R. Mott. "Great issues await these boys. Great responsibility will come on this particular generation, and it is going to be subject to very special dangers."

The truth of this is recognized by the leaders in our churches. By what Christian agencies can our boys be fitted to meet their responsibilities as citizens and nation builders? In all countries this is a living question, made especially urgent by the conditions born of the world war.

Of special interest, therefore, is the Second World Conference of Y. M. C. A. Workers with Boys, held at Pörtschach in Austria last month. The first conference was held at Oxford, England, just before the outbreak of the great war. This is the first gathering of the world movement since that disruption of former ties.

"The Place of Boyhood in the Nations of the World," and the relations of the Association thereto, was the subject of discussion by 900 delegates from nearly 50 countries, with a full quota of 100 from America.

For many months five commissions have been preparing reports. These deal with the physical condition of boys throughout the world, and with the legal, religious, vocational and domestic, civic, and national phases of boy life.

A feature of the conference was a world exhibit, the American contribution to which presented the picture story of the why and how of work for boys, with emphasis upon the four phases of Association work,—spiritual, physical, social, and mental. This exhibit revealed an extent and quality of work for boys of which few people are aware. This has been carried on quietly and steadily through the years without seeking publicity, and thousands of active workers in church and Sunday school were led to Christ in the boys' branches of the Associations.

The thought of the tremendous potencies residing in the boyhood world appeals strongly to the imagination. Realizing that ideals of righteousness must dominate the rising generation before they can dominate the nations, it is clear that the direct way to solve the difficult problems that press upon church and state alike is to enlist and train the boys, the hope of the race.

NEGRO STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT.

An unanticipated event of the World's Student Christian Federation convention at Peking a year ago was the prominence achieved by a Negro secretary from America, and the ability by which he earned it. It was not only an eye-opener to the Orientals present, as they saw a colored brother hold his own on the platform with the white leaders, but it made visible and audible the fact that the time had come to pay more attention to Negro students in all lands.

In recognition of this obligation and opportunity the Federation committee adopted certain constructive measures. The April issue of the "Student World" is devoted to a survey of the Negro student field in America and Africa, its extent, present occupation, and future needs and possibilities. A number of Negro leaders contribute the articles.

We read of a Christian Union of West African and West Indian students which was formed in London some years ago; of the African Student Union in this country, which began to take shape in 1912, and

which has held increasingly important annual conferences each year since the war; of Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association activities among Negro students. Max Yergan contributes an informative article on the native students of South Africa and their problems, while Prof. Aggrey writes on the broader field of native students in Africa.

From these articles we learn that there is earnest and increasing response to the opportunities of advanced education. Hitherto mission schools have been pioneers in this effort, but now the governments, especially the British government, are establishing facilities. So far the educated native leaders have been almost one hundred per cent Christians. But changes are coming in the student constituency. They break away from tribal and social ties and customs of the past. The power of religion is not always as strong as it was. The race problem is acute. The mission field is affected by the movement to have African-governed churches. In Jamaica there is no color line; Negroes enjoy the same opportunities as English-born visitors or Jamaica-born colonials.

Think of the multitudes of Negroes in the world, and one can see the unlimited prospects before a Christian Negro student movement!

CURRENT THOUGHT.

"I find wireless most interesting," Cardinal Dubois, archbishop of Paris, is reported to have said, "but **broadcast sermons** cannot be expected to convert any one. Wireless is too dry and cold to have an effect. I have listened to wireless speeches by famous orators, and admired their fine phraseology and style, but they left me unmoved."

Handicraft by Camp Fire Girls at the Northfield Conference of Religious Education.

The present-day needs of the church are not the vagueness and freedom of rationalism, but the self-limitation of a Scriptural faith. Not the methods of the politician or the worldling, but Christ's ways of regeneration and faith and prayer. An authoritative Bible, an evangelical theology, a spiritual church,—there are our instruments for winning men. They are God's appointed means; and I would rather send out from this seminary ten consecrated preachers and missionaries than a hundred brilliant scholars and critics. Our first need is to be great believers. If

we seek first the kingdom of God, all other things needed shall be added to us.—Dr. Augustus H. Strong.

You can write to your people and your religious papers and tell them to **send the best** they have to these Far Eastern mission fields. These people need a positive faith from a positive man. They have doubts enough; they do not need to be fed any more! If a missionary is uncertain in his faith, they will be the first to know it and turn away in disappointment, or else be led astray,—which is worse. If Kipling could say, concerning "The White Man's Burden," in regard to mere physical responsibility for these weaker Eastern races, "Send forth the best ye breed!" we surely ought to be able to say it, and demand it, for the spiritual needs of these same people. We need "the best ye breed" for this work out here, and the natives need that same kind, or the work will fail.—General Leonard Wood.

College authorities do not seem to have become sufficiently familiar with psychology to realize that the religious nature of the student is just as important an element in personality as the moral, physical, psychological, and intellectual, and that in the last analysis history has proven that the religious nature is able to marshal all of the resources of personality in its service as is no other element. For this very reason it possesses unique powers for assisting in helping to solve the moral, psychological, and intellectual problems which are now so pressing.

The intellectual, moral, physical health of the students is made a matter of concern; the religious health of the student is regarded as a matter of no serious concern for the college. The result of this policy is now being reaped. Fully seventy-five per cent of the students in our American colleges are suffering from a mild or severe attack of acute unbelief.—Rev. Albert Clarke Wyckoff.

"Open his eyes!" At times God does give to his own the privilege of piercing the shrouds of life, and of seeing unseen things. "Open his eyes that he may see!" is a cry that God still answers, to make eternal things become tremendously real, and vivid, and very present, so that suddenly,

"Without a screen
At one burst is seen
The Presence wherein we have ever been."

All this seems, somehow, easier in solitude and detachment, as in the mission field. The skies seem clearer down here than amid the din and dust of civilization, and heaven seems nearer. And the result? The result is, that we get a new set of values. "I had eternity set in my heart, and after that nothing less contented me," was the way one saint of old put it. God give us all far horizons! For it is a thousand times worth while to be so stilled before God that we can dream these dreams, and see these visions.

Yet how very far that is from being visionary. We can build our houses, and navigate our ships, and teach our classes, yes, and cook our food, so much the better for having seen God. Why, it is the most practical of all practices to learn to so pierce the veil! It makes the victory of faith so much more certain. It enables us to take one of the great promises of God, and as it were, to "kneel down upon it, as the Moslem kneels down upon his prayer carpet." This seems like taking possession indeed of the good land of his promises! God give us each large traffic with the skies!—Dr. Northcote Deck, Solomon Islands.

A Fourth of July Suggestion.

The strength of America, the strength of all civilized society, are in their religious convictions.

They are not a power which is diminishing, but a power which is increasing. The standard of conduct which they require was never before so universally recognized and accepted. It sanctifies every place of worship, it is revealed in every institution of learning, it supports every activity of government, it sustains every economic structure. In domestic affairs, in international affairs, it is more and more the reliance of mankind. The evidences of it are increasing, the results of it are accumulating. More and more the people are living under the conviction that it is

righteousness alone which exalteth the nation.

Surely the recognition of this fact, which stands out above all others, ought to make these days of abiding satisfaction and of continuing faith and determination for the American people.

It is not in the results of a day or a year that the Eternal Purpose is revealed. If we are to avoid being dismayed by the accidental, and if we are to contribute anything, it is necessary to take a larger view, to make a wider survey, and work in harmony with these ever invincible forces which are always advancing the base line of progress.—Vice-president Calvin Coolidge.

THE MISSION FIELD.

The Presbyterian Mission in Chile is celebrating its 50th birthday this year.

There are **so many boys and girls in India** that if they stood in a line, shoulder to shoulder, and great bridges were made across the sea for them to stand on, they'd reach right around the world!—"Lutheran Boys and Girls."

The clearest statement of **what the gospel has done for Chile,** and the highest tribute to Protestant missionary work, has come from a Roman Catholic bishop at the Eucharistic Congress recently held at Santiago. One day the topic for consideration was, "What shall we do with the Protestants?" When the discussion was begun, one man in the spirit of the old Inquisition days said:

"Let's burn them at the stake, and get rid of them!"

Others spoke in about the same way, until finally Bishop Edwards rose and said:

"Brethren, say what you will about the Protestants, but they have three things that we may well learn from them. They have a clergy whose life is beyond reproach, whereas ours is the laughingstock of the whole country. They preach and they practise temperance, and we ought to do the same. They have the open Bible, and they put it into the hands of the people."

The attitude of foreign missionary societies in England to the Bible is brought to a more definite issue by the action of the Bible League in advertising the names of over a hundred churches and missionary organizations that have signed a declaration that they neither appoint nor retain on their preaching or teaching staff those who do not accept the veracity and divine authority of the whole Bible, and the inerrancy of the Son of God. They earnestly appeal for a similar declaration by every Protestant evangelical religious society appealing for or supported by contributions from the Christian public.

The advertisement naïvely adds a note that the publication of this appeal will have a beneficial effect on both modernist societies and those based on the old faith, because it will assist both in avoiding the receipt of money given under misapprehension!

At the last meeting of the Indian Christian Council, which is the Indian representative of the Edinburgh Continuation Committee, action was taken asking the Allahabad Industrial Institute to **train the teachers for all the mission rural community schools in North India.** It is the only missionary institution with adequate equipment and faculty for this most important piece of Christian service. "We are geographically located in the right place, so that it looks as though our twelve years' struggle was now to be crowned with abundance of success, as the missionary societies of India are asking us to serve them in one of their most difficult problems, viz., the education of the mass movement converts. All this would have been utterly impossible without the prayer and good will and money of our good friends in America, and I thank you all for what you have done."—Sam Higginbottom.

Dr. Paul W. Harrison emphasizes **"The Call of Arabia"** in the "United Presbyterian." He tells of open doors for missionaries, especially medical missionaries; of open minds seeking education; of open hearts ready to receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord. "Not all hearts in Arabia are open. Only a few are, but the number

steadily increases: men and women who have a heart ready for the reception of Christ and his salvation, and power, and companionship. In Maskat we have seen a humble and sincere seeker after God find his salvation in Christ and witness a good confession. In Behrein there are at least two who are earnestly seeking a knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In Basrah and Amara we have seen not only sincere inquirers, but some of the finest Christian converts yet won for the glory of our King. Especially in Kuweit the Spirit of God has been working. A number have sought Christ with an open heart, and several have found him."

The Sudan Interior Mission reports a force of 72 missionaries.

"At our main stations an average of two thousand listened every Lord's Day to the gospel message, while at our out-stations, which are ever increasing, our native pastors and evangelists have an average attendance in their little chapels of about six thousand each Lord's Day. These are apart from the multitudes reached in the open air services conducted in the market places and elsewhere. Altogether, nearly ten thousand definite services were held for the preaching of the gospel during 1922.

"The actual results of all this ministry can never be tabulated, but for the encouragement of those who were praying and giving at home we may say that four hundred and eighty converts were baptized during the year, after very careful examination and instruction. In addition to these, great numbers have professed to receive the message, but have not yet been openly received into the church. This record is made simply for our encouragement and the strengthening of our faith in the power of Christ, who is turning these dark peoples to the light of the truth, and showing forth his saving power in their midst."

The 88th annual report (for 1922) of the **Punjab mission** of the Presbyterian Board tells of an increase of 3283 baptisms, but the baptized community was in fact increased by 4632 in all, by Christians moving into the area.

Three things receive special mention: encouraging developments in district evangelistic work, the hope of a spiritual quickening, and the need of coöperation in higher education. A day of prayer and fasting, whose influence pervaded more or less the whole Presbyterian church in India, is described in another paragraph. Regarding higher education the report says:

"Higher education is in unstable equilibrium. The actual pressure of the 'Conscience Clause' in the United Provinces, and the probability of its coming into force in other parts of India, are factors to be reckoned with. So is the increasing cost of our educational institutions, and the competition involved in the presence in so many places of better-equipped schools and colleges. The lesson seems to be this: fewer institutions, and those better-equipped. The highroad to the goal is the way of coöperation. What one mission cannot do in isolation several missions may be able coöperatively to accomplish."

One of the most encouraging signs in the Shensi (China) work of the American Board, which, by the way, is entirely supported by one man, a manufacturer in New England, is the **reaching of influential persons** in the counties. Magistrates and officials are prominent in nearly all of the churches.

"One interesting development at Mi Chih Hsien has been the reaching of a family of thirty-six members, all of whom are now Christians, although not all at the time of my visit had been received into the church. They have turned over their family temple to become the chapel for their village. The county magistrate at Mi Chih Hsien was baptized at the time of my visit. He is a fine type of man, and is setting an example which is new to the thought of many people in the conduct of the government officials. He religiously observes Sunday, his yamen being closed on that day, and all official business obliged to wait until Monday. He and his wife attend church services regularly, and he gives his whole-hearted support to the work of the church. In his great room he has a number of Scripture posters which we supply to our churches, while in his guest hall he has put up a great variety of Christian tracts and posters, and every guest

who comes receives an explanation of Christianity, and is urged to accept the same and unite with a church. Each day he has set aside an hour for reading Christian fundamentals, and Mr. Hou, our pastor, is invited to come to the yamen at that hour, or any hour that he can find the time. Buddhism, already losing its power practically all over the field, has received a great set-back in this center. Seven or eight of the leading gentry of the town, who have been coming to a fuller understanding of the Christian life, have decided to take together the new step of uniting with the church."

All in One Lifetime.

In Cairo lives the widow of a missionary who came to Egypt in 1862 when there were 50 members of the evangelical church. In her own lifetime she has seen that organization grow to a membership of 16,000 adult communicants in a total community of at least 40,000, enrolled in 300 congregations or preaching places.

She has seen schools grow from five to 187, with 15,000 pupils, Muslim and Christian, receiving Bible lessons as well as instruction in secular branches daily.

She has lived to see the establishment of a medical service—in which the Bible is presented to every patient,—providing 82,000 treatments a year. She even has seen a village or two where evangelical Christians outnumber the followers of all other faiths.

All this in one lifetime! And though, perhaps, the hardest struggles are yet to come, what may not take place during the life of the newest missionary, now that enlightenment is spreading so rapidly? The responsibility, evangelistically, lies largely with the American United Presbyterian Mission and the Egyptian Evangelical Church it has established.

A Chinese Pentecostal Ingathering.

The marvels of Pentecost are being recorded from time to time in connection with the Chinese Christian general, Feng Yu Hsiang. Just now we refer to the baptism of 4100 of his men in one day.

His army has been stationed for some months past about six miles outside Peking. The great event is described in the "Baptist" by Mr. Horace J. Nickels, who was present.

When one of Gen. Feng's soldiers professes to become a Christian and wishes to be baptized, he has to take a prescribed course of Bible study, and pass a thorough examination, before he is allowed to receive the ordinance of baptism. Moreover, the candidate's major must give a signed guarantee of his fitness. Evangelistic services and Bible classes help to keep the fires burning and to advance the converts in grace and experience.

A number of foreign missionaries assisted the native army chaplains and other native pastors in the baptismal services, which were held in several brigades. Brigadier Generals Li Ming Chung, Sung and Liu, and other high officers also took part by reading Scripture, holding the water bowls, and in other ways.

Who can measure the significance of this phenomenon of a Christian general who not only promotes the spread of Christ's name so actively among his troops, but also sees that the conduct of professing Christians adorns their profession?

United Action in Venezuela.

The Rev. W. Reginald Wheeler, assistant secretary of the Presbyterian Board, has recently completed a tour of visitation in Latin America. In Venezuela a conference was held with representatives of eight societies in that land, the first meeting of its kind ever held there. The twelve topics outlined for consideration in the coming congress on Christian work to be held in Montevideo, Uruguay, next February, were discussed with special reference to Venezuela. A beginning was made in the division and allocation of territory in the country among the different organizations, and other matters of united interest received attention.

Six months ago his trip began. "As members of the deputation of the Board, we have visited Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela. We have been almost constantly with citizens of foreign nations. We have mingled with these people intimately. We have traveled to the country towns and villages, and to regions far distant from the cities most frequented by

foreign visitors. Not once have we heard a word of suspicion or distrust because of our nationality or work; everywhere we have met love and good will, and the direct look and the kind hand clasp that are indicative of true friendship. These people of the two Americas south of us are so friendly and so warm in heart that service with them and for them in turn warms one's spirit and brightens one's horizon. It is to Another rather than to ourselves that we can trace that atmosphere of friendliness; to the One who said, 'I call you not servants, but friends.' We have seen his life shining through the eyes of these Latin-American followers of his, and sounding through their words to us, even though they were spoken in an alien tongue. There is a picture in the building of the Pan-American Union, in Washington, dedicated to the friendship of the 21 American republics, which bears an inscription in the handwriting of a well-known American: 'God has made us neighbors; let justice make us friends!' Justice is needed, indeed, but something more than justice as well. A better word might be: 'God has made us neighbors; let Jesus make us friends!'"

RELIGION IN SIAM.

Siam has its peculiar interest from the religious point of view, says a bulletin of the National Geographic Society, for it is the only independent nation in which Buddhism is the state religion (Tibet being eliminated from consideration because its political status is in question, and because its Buddhism is of a markedly degenerate type). But though Buddhism is the established religion, Siam is unsurpassed in its tolerance. Not only is the practice of all other religious beliefs freely permitted, but the government has accepted the principle that a man's religion shall not bar him from even the higher administrative and judicial positions.

In a sense it may be said that Bangkok, the capital, is Siam much more truly than Paris may be said to be France. In a country of 9,000,000 inhabitants it is virtually the only city. Its population is more than half a million. The capital has become in the eyes of the king and his people a symbol of Siamese power, and millions of dollars have been spent to beautify it and make it in many ways a convenient, modern city, drained and cleaned, sparkling with electric lights, and with streets in which the clang of tramway gongs and the chug of motor cars are common sounds.

Siam is about the size of France. It is a tropical country lying in the same latitude with the Egyptian Sudan, southern India, the Philippines and Central America; but thanks to pleasant breezes it does not experience the extremes of heat known to the Indian plains.

Priests Still Educational Factor.

Through an Education Department the state has established public schools throughout the kingdom, though the system is naturally best in the capital. The old system of education by the Buddhist priests in the temples is continued, however, and thousands of the boys of the country receive an elementary training in that way. Both the primary educational facilities and those of the higher branches are materially supplemented by schools maintained by Christian missionaries.

In many ways Siam and its people may be compared to Burma and the Burmese. The religion in both cases approaches more nearly the original teachings of Buddha than does the degenerate Buddhism of Tibet and Mongolia, or the greatly modified Buddhism of China and Japan. But while the scholarly minority of Siam follows more or less closely the original Buddhist teachings, the religion among the masses of the people is overlain and corrupted by numerous superstitions and practices of nature worship and the propitiation of evil spirits.

There are large numbers of monks in the country, and as in Burma it is the custom for practically every male to enter a monastery for a greater or less period. Unlike the Chinese Buddhist temples, the Siamese temples are for the most part deserted on ordinary days. On religious festival days, however,—the counterpart in a way of our Sundays,—the Siamese put on their best clothes and "go to church." On such occasions all take part in the services, one of the most important parts

of which is the statement by the priests and the repetition by the worshipers of the five commandments, four of which are exact counterparts of four of the Ten Commandments,—injunctions against killing, stealing, lying and committing adultery. The fifth Buddhist commandment prohibits the drinking of intoxicating liquors.

Like the Burmese, again, the Siamese are a happy, easy-going people. Their delta, annually overflowed, produces an abundance of rice, and rice is practically the only food that the Siamese desires. There is little or no abject poverty, the gaining of a livelihood is not difficult, and the Siamese of the masses sees little to be discontented with in his lot. He is inclined therefore to respect things as they are, and to be an unconscious standpatter both in religious matters and in many other things. It is against this constitutional inertia of the masses that Christian missionaries have had to carry on an up-hill fight.

NILE VALLEY EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN.

This campaign was begun at Assuan (Shellal), the southern limit of the Arabic-speaking portion of Egypt, in the autumn of 1921 by a party of foreign and Egyptian workers, numbering from eight to twelve, on the house-boat Columbia. The object was to preach the gospel and distribute literature in all the hitherto unreached Mohammedan towns and villages of the country. During the year, as the party moved down the river, between 200 and 250 places were visited. The work was resumed last October at Edfu, where, on account of the heat of the summer, it was left off last season. This place is between 65 and 70 miles from Assuan, the starting point.

The workers are greatly cheered by the responses accorded the message by so many Moslems in the villages, especially as they have had no means of contact like medicine, only the gospel. It is assumed that few of the people will ever have another chance to hear, hence the effort is to make the best use of the hour or two devoted to each village.

Egyptian Christians have coöperated with financial help, and last year nine of their young people gave assistance on the boat for a longer or shorter time, without compensation.

A Missionary Hymn.

Ye heralds of salvation,
In homeland or abroad,
To every tribe and nation,
Ambassadors of God:
Proclaim the message glorious,
His mighty power to save,
Who rose o'er death victorious,
Triumphant from the grave!

From lowlands and from highlands,
O'er prairie, steppe, and plain,
To earth's remotest islands,
Extends our Lord's domain;
Until the time appointed
His ransomed home to bring,
Shall come the Lord's anointed,
Our councillor and king!

A pamphlet has been issued by Dr. W. L. McClenahan, at present at home in Princeton, N. J., giving extracts from workers' letters, from which we cull a few.

The villages as such, even strict Moslem villages, are very important, for the Egyptian is rapidly developing; there has been surprising advance even in character since the riots of 1919. It is important to remember that a village lad may become a prime minister, or the national leader. Systematic working of the villages is more than desirable: it is essential. The new Constitution has ordained as a fundamental principle that every village child is to be educated, and that at the country's expense, and his father is to be compelled to send him to school.

At one place an old woman, touched by the message, pressed a small piaster into a worker's hand, saying, "I wish to make an offering as you have shown me the words of God today." "I told her that we did not take money, and learning that her son could read, I gave her a Gospel in return."

"Visited Geziret El Riqia this morning, and having reached the center of the village, the women simply besieged us, and we could go no further. How they listened! And as one continued to speak, a spirit of conviction took hold of them, and

one after another proceeded to bring forth some besetting sin, and occasionally the sin of other women. The saddest confession of all was left till the last when we rose to go, and it was whispered in the ear by a sad-faced, elderly woman. Drawing me towards her, she lowered her voice, and with lips to my ear she said, 'What about the man I have lived with for the last six years?' Not understanding, I asked, 'Is he angry with you?' 'Oh, no, not that!' she answered. I then asked, 'I suppose he is your husband?' 'No,' she replied, 'I am his slave.' Asking again what she should do, I told her to repent, to which she eagerly replied, 'I do,' and then she promised to walk in the way of the clean heart."

"This morning, crossing the river to the town opposite, we entered the town in the company of a number of women, each carrying a huge water-pot of water on her head. They were curious to know why we were there, and as soon as we found a suitable spot I began to tell them. It was a pretty sight, twelve women in a semi-circle, with interested faces, poising their full vessels so gracefully, with no sign of fear of their toppling over. I said to Miss Haight, What a picture this would make for our friends at home, all sharing the work with us by their prayers and gifts! Then turning to the women I urged them to make haste home with their burdens, and return. Close by a kindly woman invited us into her courtyard, and soon about fifty came around us. It was not easy to persuade them to be quiet, but after a time many of them heard, and one earnest woman who did not take her eyes off us all the time repeated the message to others. It was a great encouragement to see that at least one soul knew how to get a clean heart, and how it might be kept clean. For some time a kind-looking man who came to the doorway and beckoned us to go with him, listened with great attention. We went with him, as he had come to fetch us to the Omdeh's house, where the women-folk wished to see us. The Omdeh's wife, a reserved and dignified woman, welcomed us warmly and kept them all quiet while we told her of the One mighty to save and to keep all who trust themselves to him. It was a great opportunity, and they entered into the message, and we left rejoicing to be amongst those sent forth by the Holy Spirit."

WOMEN CITIZENS OF CANTON.

Miss Helen Thoburn.

The political reports from China in these lawless days give an effect of surface confusion that discourages one in the attempt to understand the country. Just a little below this bewildering surface, however, great social changes are slowly and surely moving, which, if they are comprehended, make this period of what is sometimes called "China's real revolution" as significant as the days of 1911.

One of the most important of these changes is that which is at present taking place in the status and thought of the women of China, and a laboratory for the study of this development is the work of the Young Women's Christian Association. The fact that by its nature this organization is dealing with some of the most hopeful elements in life,—youth, Christianity, and the group-power of women,—heightens its significance in these years when China needs all the hope she can lay hold on.

The Young Women's Christian Association is still comparatively new in China. It has been built up by contributions of leadership and money from six other countries, the largest amount of both of these coming from the United States, but from the beginning the aim has been to transfer the control of the organization as quickly as possible to the women of the country. The organization has thus been one of the pioneers among the missions on the field in the complete trusting to Chinese leadership which was the dominant note of the great National Christian Conference held here last year.

The National Committee of the China Y. W. C. A. has branches in eighty-eight schools and colleges, and in twelve of the leading cities. Of the latter, Canton is one of the most unique, for it is the only city center in which the work was initiated entirely by the Chinese themselves. In the critical days just after the Revolution, when, as always in case of social change, there were new opportunities and new perils for the women of the city, a group of women, feeling that they could wait no longer for

Chinese Staff of the Canton Y. W. C. A.

the foreign leadership for which they had been asking for several years, organized a city Y. W. C. A. "on their own." Your editor has asked for a brief account of this Association for the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK.

It is probably safe to say that the average American has a hazy impression that Canton is the seat of one of China's two governments, but as to whether Dr. Sun Yat Sen is at any given time in power there, or not, he is not certain. Neither is the average citizen in China. When one of the foreign secretaries of the Canton Y. W. C. A. essayed recently, half in fun, and not for print, to condense into fifty words a history of the valiant effort of that Association to raise money and buy property for a Y. W. C. A. building, the absurd result so well reflected some of the difficulties of attempting substantial work in a country made chaotic by civil war, that we give it here:

"Bought two piecey land. Borrowed $20,000 of officials. Government changed, deeds lost, deeds recovered. Raised $30,000. Debts paid. Sixty coolies sold us land. Land-sharks. Middlemen. Bought more land. Deeds stamped 8 per cent. Raised more money. Government changed. Money went bad. Deed lost. New deed. Six deeds. Now sitting on land. Government changing."

Nevertheless, while governments may change with comic opera rapidity, the development of leadership among Chinese women is steadily and surely becoming one of the strong factors for future reckoning. The board of directors of the Canton Y. W. C. A., whose enterprize shows between the lines of the above quotation, is made up of a most interesting group of women, many of them so modern as to be combining marriage and the practice of a profession, and many of them using, in Chinese fashion, both their family and married names, to the confusion of the foreigner who is trying to get them straight. Combined with these elements of modernity is the quaint fact that, meeting in the evening to accommodate those who have business hours, they hold their meetings at the full of the moon so that they may get safely home through Canton's complicated streets after the meetings are over.

They assume responsibility to a degree amazing to the Westerner's conventional conception of what Chinese women are like. During a recent visit of Dr. Sherwood Eddy to Canton, for example, I saw some of them and their colleagues in the thick of preparations for meetings of women all over the city, and also heard their plans for following up his visit with a scheme for religious education among women through the city churches. There were foreign secretaries present, in an advisory relationship, but the Chinese unquestioningly took the lead. Their spirit and ability are typically shown in the following letter which they sent last summer to

the National Young Women's Christian Association of the United States:

"When the Y. M. C. A. was built our women wondered if the women of America were as interested in the women of China as the American men are in the men of China. Our national secretary, Miss Coppock, assured us that they were, and said that they would promise a building to the first Y. W. C. A. in China that would secure its own land. The Canton women found a suitable piece of land in a central part of the city, on the wide road that has been built where the old city wall used to stand. We had a campaign, and through the courtesy of the Canton government were able to buy the land for only $50,000. The land is now ours, and we would like to claim the promise.

"The Canton Association is ten years old. We have outgrown our rented quarters, and feel that we cannot do much more until we have more room. A building for women is very much needed in Canton at the present time. The city is progressing very rapidly, and as the women are more and more free to leave their homes we want a center to which they can come easily, and a place which may be used by the various women's organizations that are being formed."

Shortly after this letter was sent, the group again characteristically decided that they could not wait for America, and moved the whole Association into a tiny one-room temple that chanced to stand on the property on which their new building is eventually to be erected. Here are the desks of the six Chinese and four foreign secretaries, the tea-table, the typewriter, and on rainy days drawn up in one corner, the Association rickshaw! From these miniature headquarters the board and staff conduct their city-wide work,—a woman's exchange for the assistance of the women in the prisons and detention homes, educational classes to supplement the inadequacy of the city schools, the Bible study and discussion groups referred to above, plans for a summer camp for girls (the only outdoor vacation place for Chinese girls and women in all South China), the correlation of the interests of the Christian students of the city, etc.

On one wall of the little temple hang the floor-plans of the building which, as soon as the money can be secured, will spread over the land surrounding the temple. A principal feature of these plans is the "Home-making Unit." Whereas in America the churches, women's clubs, and general backing of a more or less Christian civilization tend to keep our home life on fairly high level, there has as yet been comparatively little effect on the notably low levels of home life in China, and Christian leaders are united in thinking that most of China's social problems must find their first solution in her homes. The Young Women's Christian Association, because it is Chinese, and organized on an interdenominational and national scale, is looked to with peculiar eagerness to pioneer in this field. The Canton Association has already conducted classes and institutes in the principles of building Christian homes. The general secretary, Miss Katherine Vaughn, formerly of the New York City Y. W. C. A., writes, "We hope that our building may be a community center, and are including in our plans a home-making unit in which there shall be a model house, equipment for teaching about the building, furnishing and care of the home, cooking, food values, health measures and the care of the sick, and of children, all the things which will develop the spirit which alone makes a home possible. We would like to have this a center to which all women in the city might come for information, and we would like too to be able to send teachers out into the city schools which would coöperate with such a Home Service Department. We would never wish to introduce Western homes as such, but to discover any underlying principles that might be of use in making a Chinese home more happily Chinese. . . . . When the spirit of the home is Christian, the form will take care of itself."

One comes away from the southern capital with one's mind in a riot of colorful pictures: the crowded Bund, with its dense fringe of little brown boats, in which Canton's famous boat population are born, live and die; women pulling heavy drays, or being let down like Paul in a basket, from the roof of a building in process of erection, for which they help to carry heavy loads of bricks and plaster; silk-gowned

students hurrying seriously along the new wide streets; dodging in and out among the crowds the ever-present small girls, with the ever-present babies strapped in gay wee hammocks on their backs; the dusky "old style" streets, gleaming in their dark recesses with ivory, jade, intricate golden fretwork, the scarlet candles of worship, and peacock fans, and in the wake of shouting bearers, a chair working its way along in which sits a lady of the pre-revolution type, not so easily seen by the general public. But every day sees more tearing down of the old walls, more widening of the tortuous, fascinating streets, more release, both literal and spiritual, for the women and girls of Canton. One is glad for the steadying strength of Christianity, present and ready to meet them more than half-way, and for its gifts of service, high home standards, belief in women, which come into China in these years of her great change, via the women of such countries as our own.

IS THE SOCIAL GOSPEL A GOSPEL?

Rev. W. E. Orchard, D. D.

No, it is not, if it means that the social gospel is some adaptation of, or mere addition to, the gospel of Jesus Christ! For that gospel contains the one hope of man's salvation. The efforts to construct and proclaim a social gospel have already made manifest that there is some fundamental fallacy at the root of it; its aim is confused, and its results ineffective. A gospel which is intended for, and can be received only by, a social organism is a gospel which can never even be proclaimed; for a message can really only be addressed to individuals, apart from whom the social organism has no existence. Any attempt to proclaim a purely social gospel must beat the air, because it expects society to do something, and appears to evade the obligation or postpone the action of individuals, who are the only responsible and active elements of society. Even sermons on social subjects, however necessary they may be, must be counted entirely out of place in evangelistic preaching if the only means of carrying them out is to wait until the next election.

The gospel of Christ preaches a salvation which is to be accepted now, and by the individual. There must be no surrender on the absolute priority and immediacy of Christ's gospel. The abandonment of the gospel of personal salvation for that of the gospel of social salvation not only cuts the very nerve of the evangelistic appeal, but it does the greatest possible disservice to society. After a few disappointing experiments a return is often made to a purely individualistic outlook, and perhaps a reactionary attitude towards all demands for social reform is taken up.

We shall evade this modern confusion and its inevitable reaction if we put our question in a different way: Is the gospel a social gospel? And the answer is, Yes! emphatically Yes! If we take the gospel as preached by Jesus himself, we shall find it is called by him the gospel of the kingdom, that is, the good news of God's sovereignty, or God's reign. Now according to Jesus souls are saved by being brought into the kingdom, that is, incorporated into a new order of society. The very process of salvation is the conversion of the soul from being an isolated, self-seeking, anti-social individual into a social, responsible, and socially creative personality. This process can only be worked out through a change wrought in individuals, but that change makes in them a profound alteration: from a creature which tries to stand alone, independent of God and his fellows, to one who realizes his dependence upon God and the need of a right attitude towards his fellows, if he is to be truly and wholly saved.

The proclamation of this gospel is, in the first instance, to enable a man to see the kingdom, of which he is actually made capable by being born again; and the certainty and completion of his salvation is only assured by his entrance into that kingdom. This means to say that a man begins to be saved when he SEES the king-

dom of God, appraises the values for which it exists, and accepts the principles on which alone it can be established; but until it is established his salvation is unfinished. And unless he sets himself to work out his vision into a social order in accordance with it, he becomes untrue to his vision and is in danger of becoming lost. The faith which saves is, first of all, a vision, but if it does not lead to social works it is not true faith at all.

The first thing the proclamation of the gospel has therefore got to show is that man is in tremendous danger of losing his soul because of the society of which he forms part. This society is referred to in the Johannine writings of the New Testament as "the world"; but a misunderstanding of that term leads to confusion. "The world" does not mean temporal existence, nor does it mean this earthly planet: it means the society which man has organized. Now that society is doomed: about that the New Testament is in no doubt. "The whole world lieth in the evil one;" "He that loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is possible to preach this gospel at the present hour with tremendous power and urgent point, for we can discern in our social order the sin of man's soul written out in startling form and inescapable condemnation. The selfishness into which man has fallen, by separating himself from the ground of his being and the true foundation of his personality in God, works out into a social order in which cunning and craft are rewarded, and goodness and honest labor are defrauded. The self-interest which is the mainspring of worldly society is not only a morally corrupt but an economically destructive motive. The seeking for private profit in the end threatens to bring the whole machinery of production to a standstill; and since profits are always higher for luxuries and even harmful things than for necessaries, the order which is based upon profit-making as its motive is bound at last to bring the world to starvation. These facts, which are slowly being driven home to the most conservative and optimistic, enable the modern preacher to cry with a voice more insistent than that of Wesley, "Flee from the wrath to come," for that is no longer the hell of a future world, but a hell which has invaded this world, and a wrath which has actually arrived. In addition, the hatred and fear with which the economic order inspires all classes make religious fellowship impossible. This world order and the kingdom of God are seen to be utterly incompatible. If souls are to be saved, they must first of all repent, that is, they must change their minds, alter their values; secondly, they must renounce the world order, they must see the evil thing that it is; and thirdly, they must seek the kingdom of God and its justice.

On the other hand, the gospel of Christ has a direct message to social revolutionaries. They see what Christians so often fail to see, that the conversion of society must be as radical as the conversion of the individual. But what they fail to see is that the conversion demanded of the individual is supernatural; it is the restoration of a man to communion with God, the reëstablishment of a connection with the supernatural order. Man's natural condition is unnatural, and has to be changed. The faith by which he sees the kingdom is a supernatural gift, and the process by which his personality is changed from being anti-social and incapable of being incorporated into society into that of a social personality, a living stone which can be built into the temple of God, demands supernatural grace. Our social revolutionaries see that a man must have a new vision, accept a new creed, revise his values, but they fail to see that this does not go deep enough unless it is built upon belief in God, and cannot possibly be carried out without a great outpouring of his Spirit upon all flesh. The social revolutionary either believes that a few can establish their new system by coercing others, which, as a matter of fact, would only make them as great tyrants as those they seek to replace; or he thinks that the kingdom can come by some gradual evolution of the social order without a radical change in the nature of man. The attempts which have been made by constitutional revolution, political reform and coercive communism must gradually persuade social

DUTILLE SEMINARY

revolutionaries that they must seek some higher power; and that power a redeeming love on which they depend each for their own salvation and for the conversion of their fellows to the true faith. The idea that any better order of society can be motived by either envy or hate ought by this time to be realized as impossible and absurd. The destruction of a few rich men, the confiscation of their property, or the mere prevention, by whatever means, of the accumulation of riches, would do very little to solve a single social problem. We want the conversion of the rich, in the first place, for the same reason that we want the conversion of the poor, that their souls may be saved; and we shall only accomplish this as we love them. We want, in the next place, the devotion of the faculties and energies which have enabled many of them to become rich to be devoted to the emancipation of their fellows and the establishment of the kingdom of God on its true spiritual economic basis. For the kingdom of God has an economic basis, set out in principle in the teaching of Jesus, which we should be able to discover and recognize to be alone sane and sound if once we would renounce our faith in the present unstable, bankrupt and self-destructive economic system.

The gospel of Christ, therefore, does not need any adaptation, subtraction or addition; it only needs to be read in the light of our present experience and our growing social disorder to become once again a powerful evangel, able to set the heart of a man aflame with hope, and actually to establish amongst us that kingdom for which it teaches us to pray and seek.

This interpretation does not diminish its appeal to the individual soul, but intensifies it: it binds up the whole business of social reconstruction with personal salvation. Despite the superficial sneers of those who do not even understand what the word "salvation" means, namely, the perfecting of the soul according to the intention of God, personal salvation is the greatest motive in the world, and when this is geared on to social revolution we shall see a tremendous impulse given to evangelism and an enormous impetus to the reconstruction of society. The evangel will no longer seem to be beating the air, and appear irrelevant to the social situation. It will make for a more profoundly personal appeal. This new understanding will get us out of the sentimental and undogmatic Christianity into which we have been betrayed, and we shall soon discover that if we are going to live together in agreement, in religious fellowship and in co-operative effort, we must just agree as to what we ought to live for, and why we are in this world; and then we shall be forced by our very social necessities to rediscover God and to seek the reëstablishment of faith in Christianity. For a time there may be a great division between the saved and the unsaved, but the line will be drawn not where it is today, but more truly in accordance with ethical reality and social concern. The methods by which we shall seek to convert the unconverted will have to be by a much more intense faith in God and costly love for man, which neither revolutionaries nor Christians have yet attained; and thus we shall be driven individually and corporately by work and worship to a greater dependence upon God and a more fervent seeking of his Spirit, without whom nothing can be truly thought or rightly done.

THE LORD'S SONG IN A STRANGE LAND.*

Rev. J. D. Jones, D. D.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Psalm 137. 4.

The psalm from which this verse is taken expresses the feeling of an exile who has but just returned from the land of his captivity. The bitter taste of banishment is still, so to speak, in his mouth. The shame, the ignominy, the insult that he and his fellow countrymen endured in Babylon are still fresh in his mind. Exile is always

* Northfield Summer School for Women's Foreign Missionary Societies.

a hard experience for a patriot. It is a strange and wonderful attachment that binds every brave and loyal soul to the land of his fathers. It may be a poor land, a bare land, an insignificant land, but the heart of the exile will turn to it even from the fairest spot on earth with unappeasable longing.

This love of home is a universal passion, but in no people did it burn with intenser flame than in the hearts of the Hebrews. The reason is to be found in their history. Their land, according to their belief, had been specially given to them by God. Their possession of it was the visible sign of God's favor. Their dwelling in it was evidence and proof to them that they really were the peculiar people of God. Religion thus combined with patriotism to make the Jew love his land. This psalm gives expression to the intensity of that passion.

And just because he loved his land so fiercely, exile was the more bitter to a Hebrew, for he seemed not simply to have lost his country but also to have lost his God. All the color passed out of his life, all the light died out of his sky. Life became dull, drab, hopeless. In their own country the Jews were great singers. The Old Testament abounds with references to their songs. They praised the Lord with psaltery and harp, with stringed instruments and organs. But in exile in Babylon they hung up their harps upon the willows, they had not a note of music left in them, their hearts were too heavy to sing. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept." Their captors often begged them to sing. Perhaps to make sport for themselves and perhaps to waken these Hebrews out of their lethargy and despondency they begged them to sing them one of the songs of Zion, but the bare suggestion was torture to these unhappy Hebrews. It is an ill business trying to sing when you carry within a sad and broken heart. "How shall we sing the Lord's song," they retorted, "in a strange land?"

I preached a sermon on this text twelve years ago. Basing myself on a hint I got from one of the old Puritan commentators, I tried to show that the strange land is always a poor place for song. Of course I was treating the verse metaphorically and seizing upon the spiritual suggestion it contained. The "strange land" of the text suggested to me the "far country" of our Lord's parable, and the point I tried to make was this: when a man wanders away from his soul's true home there is no joy for him. In the far country he always begins to be in want. There is no genuine happiness there. There is no clear and honest laughter there. There is no song there. A man soon comes to the end of the far country's pleasures, and finds that he has spent all and exhausted life of all its gladness and zest. The exiled soul cannot sing, and certainly it cannot sing the Lord's songs. Songs of all kinds die upon the lips, for song is the product of a happy heart, and no heart is truly happy in the far country. Certainly there is no joy of the Lord there. It is a matter of simple experience and observation that when men wander off into the far country they lose all their taste for religious things. They lose their liking for prayer, for the reading of the Bible, for the assembling of Christian people, and for Sunday worship. They find it impossible to sing the Lord's song in the strange land. To sing the Lord's song in that sense,—to know the full rapture and joy of living,—we must dwell in the Lord's land, which indeed is the native land of the human soul. When the younger son came back to his father's house the song revived, —there was music and dancing. And so when the soul makes its home with God it cannot help but sing, for in God's presence there is fulness of joy, and in his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Now all that is profoundly and eternally true. The true joy, the only deep and real joy is the joy of the Lord. There is no song in the far country. Music only dwells in the heart of him who makes the Father's house his home.

But it is not from that point of view I want to look at the text this morning. That is the amazing and wonderful thing about this old Book: familiar verses are constantly surprising us with new and unexpected revelations of truth. Things new and things old are continually shining out upon us from God's Word.

The strange land of my text is not to me just now the far country into which the younger son traveled. The far country in

that familiar parable stands for the deliberate choice of evil. The younger son deliberately cast off the restraints of home and plunged into the vicious indulgence of the far country. He made moral evil his food. When a man does that he inevitably says goodbye to song.

But is it not true that in another sense we all of us live in a strange land? Our citizenhome is in heaven, the apostle says. That is the soul's true native land. And in this world, this world so full of evil and so antagonistic to Christ, we are all of us more or less in exile. Again and again in the New Testament "the world" is spoken of as hostile to God, and our own experience confirms the truth of that assertion. Every one who has honestly tried to live the Christian life knows that he has to swim against the current. The world owns another allegiance and serves another king. The Christian man does not belong to the world. Down here he is an exile in a strange land, but exile though he be, in a strange land though he be, he must not let the Lord's songs die upon his lips. He must sing them out so that all in the strange land may hear. It is the strange land above every other place that ought to hear the Lord's song.

Babylon and the Song.

I can understand the Jews' silence in Babylon. They may have thought it irreverent, indecent, almost blasphemous, to sing the Lord's songs to those pagan Babylonians, especially as it was "for mirth" they wanted to hear them. To sing the Lord's songs to people who only meant to turn them into jest was like casting pearls before swine. And yet I wonder whether those Jews did right in hanging their harps upon the willows and refusing to sing a note. Was not Babylon the very place where they ought to have sung? Was not the very strangeness of the land a reason why they should have sung out their songs with fervor and passion? How could these pagan Babylonians amongst whom they sojourned know anything about the Lord if the Lord's people kept silence and refused to sing the Lord's songs? Wasn't that perhaps the very reason why the Jews had been deported to Babylon? Oh, yes, no doubt the exile was in part a punishment for their sins, but was it not also in part God's method of spreading abroad the knowledge of himself and of his grace amongst nations who otherwise would have known nothing of him? The Jews looked upon their exile as a punishment; may not God have meant it for an opportunity of ministry? What if God was really not so much set upon bringing them back from captivity and rebuilding the waste places of Jerusalem as he was upon scattering them amongst the peoples so that all the world might share in the light which they enjoyed? What if God's very purpose in sending them to this strange land of Babylon was that they might sing the Lord's song there?

There are hints in the prophets of a recognition that the strange land is the very place for the Lord's song. The book of Jonah means almost nothing else than this.

"Go, preach in Nineveh," God said to Jonah.

"Nineveh!" protested the indignant prophet, "Nineveh, which has trampled us under its heel and carried away our fighting men and our women to starving dishonor! Preach in Nineveh! Never!"

And rather than sing the Lord's song in that strange land, Jonah fled to Tarshish, that is to say, he put all the leagues of land and sea he could between himself and the strange land in which he had been told to sing the Lord's song. But his journey was not a happy one, as you remember, and after his strange experience and perils in the sea the imperious voice still sounded in his ears, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." And Jonah went, unwillingly perhaps, and still with his old Jewish prejudices strong in his heart. He sang the Lord's song in that strange land, and the people heard it, and something in it touched their souls, and there was a great repentance in Nineveh, and a great turning to the Lord.

Perhaps it was for that end God sent these Hebrews into their Babylonian exile, —that in that strange land they might sing the Lord's songs, that amongst these alien and pagan people they might speak of God, and his holiness, and his mercy. Perhaps if they had only done in Babylon as Jonah

had done in Nineveh, the people of Babylon like the people of Nineveh might have repented and turned to the Lord. For God had purposes of grace towards these Babylonian people. They too, though they had wandered far, were children of his love, and these Hebrews may have defeated and thwarted God's loving design because they hung up their harps on the willows and refused to sing the Lord's song in that strange land.

Our Modern World and the Song.

At any rate I am on perfectly safe ground when I say that in this strange land of the world in which we live it is our bounden duty to sing out bravely and clearly the Lord's song. How otherwise can the world ever become God's world? How otherwise can its people ever become God's people? If God's people are mute and mum, how are the "sons of ignorance and night" ever to know of the Lord who is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy? It is just because the world is such a strange land that we ought to sing the Lord's song.

Snatches of that song, that wonderful and unearthly song, come stealing occasionally into the ears of men. Dr. Hutton tells of an experience that befell him some years ago in the city of New York. Down at the very bottom of Broadway, opposite Wall Street, at the very center and axle of the world's intensest life, where Mammon holds his throne, rises the church spire of the Holy Trinity. It is dwarfed and almost overshadowed by the immense business and financial houses in which men so feverishly labor and scheme for the treasures of earth. One day as Dr. Hutton passed by, the bells of the church rang out that familiar tune:

> Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
> Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night!

It was a moment which for the sheer power of it Dr. Hutton says he delights to recall. There, in that place where the money world had its very seat and center of power, there came a reminder of the unseen and the eternal. There, where men were engrossed in the things of time and sense, there fell upon the ears a song that spoke of heaven.

"I was hearing the Lord's song," Dr. Hutton says, "just where the Lord's song stands in most need of being heard, and just where the Lord's song sounds most sweetly. I was hearing the Lord's song in a strange land."

And though perhaps not in so dramatic a fashion, snatches of that song come into the ears of men still. The recurrence of Sunday with its call to worship, the words of the preacher, the voice of prayer, the strains of an old hymn, the vision of a face,—these will bring into men's ears and hearts the echo of the Lord's song. I had a letter only a day or two ago in which was this reference to a late deacon in my church. I didn't know him well, but his face has often spoken to me. It was the face of a man who had found his center and the peace which passeth understanding. It spoke of heaven's rest and blessedness and joy. In a thousand ways and through a thousand channels the Lord's song makes itself heard.

The world is what it is because the Lord's song has never been entirely silent, but it would have been a better world still if it had been sung more clearly and unanimously. "How shall they hear," asks the apostle, "without a preacher?" How shall pagan peoples know of God unless we speak of him? How shall the ignorant and indifferent hear of him if we are mute? We shall be sinning against this world we were meant to help to save if we hang our harps upon the willows. Its enlightenment, its eternal salvation depend upon our brave singing of the Lord's song.

My brethren, suffer me to ask you one question: Do the men and women with whom you come in contact catch in your words and actions echoes of heavenly music? Are you singing the Lord's song?

The other day I heard a Christian minister addressing a public meeting say that in such a gathering it would scarcely be fitting to quote verses of Scripture.

"Why not?" was the audible comment of a gentleman sitting close to me.

The strangeness of the land is no excuse for silencing the Lord's song. We not only may sing it, we ought to sing it.

The Irrepressible Song.

I pass on now to say this: if we are really the Lord's people, and if we really

love his song, we simply cannot help singing it.

There will be no need to urge us to sing; we shall sing because we must. If the grace of the Lord is in our hearts we cannot but speak. If we have his joy and peace in the soul we cannot but tell others of it. When the music is in the heart, it must find expression on the lips.

"My soul shall make her boast in the Lord," cried one of the psalmists who had experienced the mercy and grace of God. What next? "The humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." He could not keep the Lord's song to himself, he had to sing it so that others might hear.

"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!" The man who is glad in the Lord always wants to share his gladness. The man who has learned the Lord's song always wants others to hear the music.

Our Lord laid a charge of silence on the recipients of his mercy, but it was a charge they but rarely obeyed. The more Jesus charged them, Mark says, the more a great deal they published. I sympathize with them in their disobedience. They had had a great experience of the Lord's mercy, and they felt they must speak or die. And so it is with all who really have tasted and seen that the Lord is gracious. There is no need to press and urge them to speak, they simply cannot keep silence. "The Lord hath spoken: who shall not prophesy?"

I wonder sometimes whether that is why so many of us are silent and dumb, that we have had no great experience of God's mercy, that we have no sense of wonder at his great salvation, that our hearts are not aflame with love. It is a rekindling of our love, a revivifying of our experience, that we need. Then we shall speak, we shall sing the Lord's song in the very strangest land.

The Song in the Strange Lands of Human Experience.

And now I want to give my text the slightest bit of a turn, and speak not of the strange land of the world, but of the strange lands of human experience into which we are sometimes taken,—sorrow, loss, bereavement, sickness.

Life as a rule pursues the even tenor of its way. It leads us through familiar places and scenes. But occasionally we are driven out into strange lands, strange and desolate and bleak. We never grow familiar with the valley of weeping or the valley of the shadow of death; they are strange lands to us, strange and hostile and dreaded. What about the Lord's song when we pass into these strange lands? The Lord's song is the only possible song for these. Such songs as they sing in the far country,—the trivial, foolish, ribald songs,—are no songs for the sick room or the death chamber. We can sing nothing at all if we cannot sing the Lord's song then.

But CAN we sing the Lord's song? Does not the music die down and die out? Does not the soul, burdened and hard pressed, say like these Jews did in Babylon, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" Yes, the soul often says that. In the strange land it often sobs, it does not sing; it moans, it does not make music.

I am not going to speak harshly of tried and burdened and sorrow-stricken souls, and yet I do want to say this: faith sings the Lord's songs even in these strange lands.

It sings it in face of difficulty and distress. Faith sings the Lord's song in face of sorrow and loss. "God's nightingale," says Rendel Harris, "must be able to sing at midnight."

Faith can, indeed, sing the Lord's song in face of death itself. "O grave where is thy sting? O death, where is thy victory?"

Something reminded me during the week of the thrilling story of the Malagasy martyrs. They were to suffer death for their loyalty to their faith, but they were unafraid. The sentence was that they were to be hurled to their death over a certain precipice. They marched to their end like conquerors. People noticed a certain exaltation in their whole attitude, a certain alacrity about their very step. And as they marched to their doom they sang:

> Saviour, grant us royal blessings
> Now as to our home we go!

The crowds that watched them stood amazed and awed. Faith is equal even to that great achievement; indeed, that is the final triumph of faith, to sing the Lord's

song in a strange land. It is a comparatively easy thing to sing the Lord's song when all is peaceful and prosperous. The real test of faith comes when we are in the strange land.

Can WE sing it? There is only one place where we can learn to sing it, and that is at the cross and empty grave of Jesus Christ; for the message of the cross is that God is infinite love, and the message of the empty grave is that life reigns. Once those become the sure faiths of the soul we shall be able to sing at midnight. In face of sorrow and loss and even death we shall sing the Lord's song because we shall know all things work together for good to them that love God.

There is only one specific recorded instance of our Lord's singing. Oh, no doubt he sang at other times, but only once is it definitely mentioned! It was the night in which he was betrayed. It was just before the agony in the garden, and the scourging, and the cross, and the grave. "They sang a hymn," I read, "and went out unto the mount of Olives." Our Lord's world, to outward seeming, was about to be shattered into ruin, his whole cause seemed about to be overwhelmed with defeat, evil seemed about to win a final victory. Yet in face of it all our Lord sang his hymn of faith and trust. There was no need to be anxious or flurried. His Father was on the throne, and would cause the very wrath of men to praise him. So our Lord sang the Lord's song in that strange land.

And so may we! None but the Lord's people can sing at such a time as this. Those who have no God, what can they do but fear and tremble and wonder? For if there be no good and wise God at the helm of things, who is to say that our world may not rush into the abyss of perdition and destruction? But faith can sing the Lord's song in this strange land and in this strange time. It sees God sitting king above the floods for ever, and it knows that at the end this song shall be heard:

"Hallelujah! Salvation, and glory, and power belong to our God! Hallelujah, for the Lord our God, the almighty, reigneth!"

DAN CRAWFORD'S LINK WITH LIVINGSTONE.

Extracts from "Back to the Long Grass."*

The Keynote of David Livingstone's Life.

There is a best way of living life, and it is best to live the best way.

We make provision for this life as if it never were to have an end, and for the other life as if it were never to have a beginning.

Out-and-out Livingstone most surely measured up to Owen Meston's words, "But I'll tell you this: a middlin' doctor is a pore thing, and a middlin' lawyer is a pore thing, but keep me from a middlin' man of God!"

Livingstone the Christian Explorer.

When Livingstone was dubbed "Ingeresa," the Englishman, he there and then became both national scapegoat and national hero, the blame and glory of a whole race being borne on the back of one man.

"Honour, not honours" was such a favorite motto of Gordon that he wrote it on all his letters. Livingstone liked and lived this motto too. When Earl Russell sent to probe him as to what honor he coveted for himself, then it was the ever-unmindful-of-himself Livingstone threw away a knighthood that had come abegging, and said, "If you stop the Portuguese slave trade you will gratify me beyond measure!"

Livingstone the Puritan.

Livingstone, they tell us, was a great stickler for his Sunday. When the day of rest came round he took this at its face value, and got twenty-four hours' rest out of the titular day of rest. Every cripple has his way of walking, and this was our highlander's way of getting over the crust of the planet Earth, one in seven, please!

* Published by George H. Doran Co., New York. Illustrated, $3.

This was the day when Majiwara was told to go back and lie down a while, after bringing in his hot drink at 5 a.m. Later came the other hot water for his daily shave. And so into the old grey tweed trousers, with the red-sleeved waistcoat covering one of the four welcome shirts sent by his daughter Agnes. How could she surmise that one of these four was fated to be both shirt and shroud?

"Keep not your kisses
For my cold dead brow!
The way is lonely:
Let me feel them now!"

Livingstone's doctrine of the Bible: "This is doubly the book of God and the God of books, because it unfolds God to man and man to himself!"

Also: In any land there is the same old international sing-song of conscience, "I know, and God knows, and God knows I know that he knows."

Also: "The Old Testament opens with man made in the image of God, and the New Testament opens with God in the image of man."

His Eloquent Silence.

Walk is greater than talk, and it is much more easy to talk about our walk than walk our talk. As I write in the forest I see native Nature preaching at me another parable on this same subject. High in the speckled sky is an eagle, ignoblest of birds, yet noblest of aeronauts. It feeds on filth down here, yet it boasts companionship with the bluest heaven up there. It is the symbol of royalty among the nations, and yet it has the most debased diet of all the fowls of the air.

Some people prefer to call Africa "The Dark Continent," instead of averring that it is they who are in the dark about it. We first begin by calling the land an "Africa" that only exists and persists in our white brains. No black man ever knew it by that name. Then, down south, you have the natives called "Kaffirs," whereas it was the Arabs who first called the Europeans this taunt-name, kafir, unbeliever!

The geography of Africa is akin to its morality, and if you accept the crushing old certainty that "Character is what a man is in the dark," then you have only to modify your noun as an adjective, and what do you get? Why, this, that character is what a man is all alone in the Dark Continent.

The Lonely Livingstone.

Like all of us, Paul plus Livingstone preferred the raw heathen to his own countrymen: I mean, the antagonistic sons of Belial who froth at the mouth because "the Livingstone lot" seek to go steadily and soberly on for God, that is, go on obeying the very command of Christ that rescued our own land from the doom of Africa. Watch the Pauline order, please. Which come first, the heathen or the other people? The apostle puts it, "In perils from mine own countrymen, in perils from the heathen." There in that order of his, there in the sarcastic sequence of the heathen being only hinderers in a secondary sense, there you have the old Bible pawkily putting its finger on the sore spot of Africa! For just as we unify all Africans under the sweeping title of "the blacks," so they reciprocate and muddle us all into a mad medley of "whites," the character of our color being, alas! not the color of our character. Although there was no clink of gold in it for Livingstone, off he went alone along the African trail, one really white man among his millions of blacks.

This one-at-a-time path-boring business very soon robs a man of any little ability he ever had to do team work with another. The very configuration of the one-by-one trail lays down the law that no two can go abreast; one must precede, the other follow. This explains how Livingstone "the path-borer" was a bit of an exploring despot. Edwards, he broke with him; Bedingfield likewise; Baines likewise; Thornton likewise; all four broken with because of this simple old certainty that while in Africa where there is a will there is a way, yet where there are several wills there is no way.

This is why in the end he set out alone: he simply couldn't be a second. How could he expect another man to tackle native mush and beans, or often the latter without the former,—sometimes neither former nor latter? In the old grooves of the old lands men work together unquestioningly because there is nothing to

question in time-honored precedents. Here in pioneering, where every unknown mile ahead was conjecture, two travelers could never conceivably agree on the when, where, and how of the venture.

There is an African saying that when "the puddle dries the tadpole dies." An ex-London traveler cut off from supplies in an African forest is a sorry sight. One explorer I know turned back to the ocean from near Tanganyika because his Lea & Perrin's Sauce supply had run out. Why should he not follow L. & P.'s example and run out likewise? True, he deserted his companion, but this also was what the sauce did to the soup. The puddle was drying, so this tadpole of an explorer was dying for the culinary consolations of London. Besides, was not that promised book of African travels to be seen through the press?

In traveling out from the border towns the explorer must follow the old forest rule and "cut down the dead loads." So many of the orthodox adjuncts of the explorer are thrown aside: the stagey personality with the big bill of expenses does not necessarily do deeds that make history. Was it not Bismarck who called a certain statesman "a lathe painted to look like iron"? And some of the jaunty gents who arrive here with big burdens become themselves the biggest burden of all.

Whom God appoints he anoints, and Livingstone's lone furrow was the exigency of exploration, not its egotism. Better than any of us did he know that when a man is wrapped up in himself he makes a pretty small parcel. "I think," said he, "one may be quite safe if alone and without anything to excite the cupidity of the natives."

Livingstone the Man of Faith.

Livingstone it was who met England's no-salary challenge and marched off in faith with little songs singing in his soul. Gordon himself was "mad" enough to do it; Livingstone likewise had a dash of this divine madness in him, St Paul beating both of them with his "we are fools for Christ's sake!"

People have laughed at Livingstone for stepping out in his old age like a P. B. with no guaranteed salary. Baffled, but not beaten, Sir Roderick Murchison, president of the Royal Geographical Society, makes straight for simple other-worldly Livingstone, who at once capitulates on the no-cash phase of this his last loyal venture!

True, Sir Roderick promised this and that, but Sir Roderick's arm of flesh was soon dead in the dust. Yet God has a host of helpers who are knights in deed if not in name.

"Doctor Livingstone doing it all without a salary?" said the incredulous American millionaire Bennett; "a Lord-will-provide expedition? Of course, the Lord will provide, and I am going to help him!"

Livingstone's Obsession.

Once too often did this great and good D. L. indulge the fine but fatal propensity of letting his high hopes unseat his higher judgment. There are men who after passing middle life find every plan go to pieces, every expectation frustrated. But not nearly so with Livingstone. Long before he said what long later he had to live to the last letter, "The end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the missionary opportunity." "I am," said he, "I am a missionary, heart and soul. God had an only Son, and he was a missionary and a physician. A poor, poor imitation I am, or wish to be. In this service I hope to live, in it I wish to die."

Not that this will-o'-the-wisp chase lacks one single element of sublimity in it. Why forget that he did it all in good faith and better company? Did not Alexander the Great dream of visiting those very fountains of the Nile? Did not Cæsar say he would leave throne and empire if he might but see those wonderful dream fountains? Hence his method in his madness, hence the fact that fanning the flame of Livingstone's life on to his last forlorn gasp was this glorious vision of a sort of Northwest Passage in these four legendary fountains of the Nile!

The Death of Livingstone.

The last stone in a pyramid is a whole pyramid. No tent to sleep in? Then he waits in the drizzling rain while his last grass hut is made. No bedstead? Then cut your saplings and make one! No

mattress? Then pull up a great bundle of grass growing on the spot, each stalk of it longer than any bed! No matches, owing to swamping in the wet? Then he gets his light from a wild fig-stick twirled cleverly to ignition. (The pyramid is narrowing to the top!) No more coffee? Then he does without it. No more bread? That, too, is done without. No more breath? (Now for it, David!) Life's long last one, long last one!

Even when he lay down for the last time with dysentery and confessed Anno Domini had conquered, we have seen the flag of faith flying to the very end over his little grass hut. Surely never did Blake's phrase win to its own as in the case of the dying doctor's hut, "Under the thatched roof of rusted gold."

So he lay dead to the sound of the natives driving off the buffaloes from the corn!

So he lay dead to the wild screaming and "stridulous coughing" of the early hemp-smoker with the gourd pipe!

So he lay dreaming about one Jesus of Nazareth, who was born in a cattle-stall in the year of Augustus' first enumeration, but his goings forth are of old, from everlasting.

Afar the golden-crested crane is calling!

THE RENEWAL OF LIFE.*

Rev. Harris E. Kirk, D. D.

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matthew 17.20.

These words were spoken by Jesus at a time when his disciples were profoundly discouraged, and yet they are not so unbelievable as they sound. We cannot but be impressed with the fact that our Lord attached immeasurable value to faith. It mattered not what other men thought of the direction of things, or how dark or discouraging the outlook might seem, he never hesitated to say such startling and original words as these about that simple act of trust in God which we call faith. Some one has said that the essence of courage is the willingness to stake life on a possibility, and that the essence of faith is the willingness to believe that the possibility exists. Our Lord's persistent urging upon his disciples of this simple act of trust in God ought in these disturbing times to enable us to freshly reconsider the whole question of faith. So this morning I want to talk to you about the renewal of life.

This saying is not so unbelievable as it sounds because in this extraordinary age we are surrounded by the visible symbols of faith. Every great advance in science and in invention is but the symbol of faith. Before ever tunnels were dug through mountains men had to believe that it could be done. Before men ever flew in the air they had to believe that it could be done, and they had to maintain that belief in the face of a great deal of scepticism. Perhaps you might say that the motto of the men that have moved the world as far as it has been moved in mechanical and industrial directions is the motto of the American engineers in France, "It can't be done. There it is!" They were always ready to match the questioning and sceptical mood of the time with a definite productivity, because they believed, they had faith.

Now, all these visible symbols of faith are but expressions of will action. You may accept it almost as an axiom that the difference between real success and real failure in life is altogether a matter of will. The men who succeed are the men who will to succeed, and the men who fail are the men who cannot will to succeed. This, of course, is a principle underlying the ordinary expression of faith between men, and in the handling and in the development of the material world around us. So our Lord turns to his disciples, even in a time when they have been discouraged, when they have failed, and he challenges them to attempt the impossible, to do that which other men would say cannot be done, as acts of faith in God.

I want you to notice how very directly this idea touches our present disturbed

* Northfield General Conference.

mental state. Since the terrible war we have lost among other things a great many of our illusions. We have lost the illusion about our civilization. We had thought, and honestly thought, that Christianity was so effective in the affairs of men that such a horrible war would never come again. We have lost that illusion. We have been made to realize that essential Christianity, New Testament Christianity, has had, most unhappily, a very slight effect upon the direction of modern policies and upon the aims of modern states. We have lost the illusion of progress, which was founded curiously enough upon the naïve faith of the 18th century. French philosophies are given a new lease of life by the interpretation of the Darwinian formula, so that now men are not so ready as formerly to believe in the progress of the human race. I think it is a good thing we have lost that illusion. At the same time we must remember this, that when we lose certain things that are bad for us we may lose certain things that are good for us that are associated with the bad. So we are weary of the talk of reconstruction. We are tired of this perpetual conversation concerning the reconstruction and the rebuilding of society, not because we have lost our faith theoretically in the need of that, but because we are more and more aware of our unfitness to reconstruct a society that the war knocked to bits.

Perhaps the real explanation of our present discontent is in that soreness of spirit which arises in a man's heart so soon as ever he is called upon to do something for his time. It only reminds us of our moral and intellectual bankruptcy, and throws us back upon our need of God. It brings clearly before us the fact that our vitality, spiritually considered, is low. We are sorely pressed and tormented by many things, and unhappily, with many of us, even in the multitude of our thoughts that assail us we do not always have the comforts of God. So in times like these, when men question their policies, when they lose faith in their institutions, when they have abandoned their early hopes and expectations of a regenerated age, it is a most helpful thing to turn back to Christ and his exceedingly simple and fundamental conception of life.

Now, all the teachings of Christ are associated with certain ideal systems. No man can understand his ideas who has not a certain philosophy of life, a certain belief concerning the constitution and direction of the universe in which he lives; and only those who are wise enough and patient enough to relate their various ideas and plans to this general scheme of things are to be trusted as leaders. Our Lord had a certain belief about the world, a certain profound faith in the course of events, and all his ideas take their color and rise from that general conception of things. So it is with this very simple and familiar conception of faith.

Again, it must strike you, if you read the Gospels with discrimination, that our Lord lived in an age very much like our own. It is true that Rome seemed to be an eternal government, standing then as Britain stands today, with a long traditional period of stability behind it, and giving order and peace to all kinds of peoples and nations. Yet it was an age of political unrest and profound discontent. His own land was seething with revolutionary plans, and he very well knew that it would only be a short time when Rome would destroy the political autonomy of the Jew. It was full of religious differences and bickerings and sectarianisms. It was full of social injustice and unrest and pain. Malign philosophies were current. Splendid immoralities, and all the evils that spring out of luxurious and too material civilization, were as common in his day as in ours. It was a time when, had you stood in the streets of Jerusalem or Antioch or Rome or any of the other cities of that era, you would have talked a great deal about reconstruction and rebuilding, your mouth would have been full of words concerning diplomacies and war plans and regenerations of society.

Yet, curiously enough, our Lord never seems to have considered the world from that point of view. His idea of society was something entirely different. He did not regard the universe as an aggregate of machines, but he looked upon it as a kingdom of souls. He has nothing to say about the reconstruction of society, and a great deal to say about the renewal of life. He does not look upon man as a machine, the worn parts of whose life may be restored

and rebuilt, but as a living organism, which when rightly planted in the soil of God will grow in the right direction. And that, you see, is the relation of this saying to the general idea of our Lord.

I want to urge upon you people of God this most important and necessary discipline. Too long, I fear, all of us have been guilty in our churches of shallow thinking. We have been reared upon the deduction that the faith once delivered to the saints was in such a state of profound healthiness and portableness that even a little child had only to reach forth his hand and take hold of it, so much as he needed, and he could use it for the health of the world. We have indulged too long the illusion that a vacant mind was somehow a fertile field of divine planting. It isn't so. God will no more sow good seed in unploughed soil than you will, and those men who have thought deeply, when their thinking has gone beneath the surface of their logical understanding to stir their emotions and to plough up the very sensitive surfaces of their spirits, have been the men who have been most gifted of God with insight into their times. The greatest single peril of the Christian church lies in this unwillingness to think deeply and profoundly about the relation of the man of God to these times. Nowhere in the Bible do you find that God ever offered any blessings to a man who would not think. That is always a painful process. It is a process called in the Scriptures travail of soul, agony.

If you want to renew a machine,—let us suppose it is an automobile,—you take it to a repair shop, and wheels and other things come out if they have been worn, and new parts are put in, and away you go. It has been reconstructed. It is not so with a human personality. We are not at all machines, nor are the processes of our lives mechanical. What we need is to be renewed. I am assuming for a moment that we belong to that favored group in the world who have been born again and regenerated by the Spirit of God, yet there do full surely come even to regenerated lives, Christian lives, those moments of spiritual somnolence when we forget our higher and better natures, when the finest and more glorious parts of our souls seem as if they were unwanted, undesired and unused, so that our consciousness at a given moment has to do only with those things that expose us more and more to the disrupting and destructive forces of our environment, and our souls begin to sleep.

How alive we are on Monday morning when we go down to our offices or our shops! How alive we are on Monday evening when we enter upon our pleasures! How we can talk about them, praise them, discuss them, plan for them, and sacrifice ourselves for them! But when we enter the sanctuary of God on Sunday there is a dullness and slothfulness of soul that is most appalling. Some of us are so submerged by the routine of life that we have long abandoned any hope of thinking better for ourselves. And it is to just such lives as these that our Lord comes with this tremendous thought,—if we had faith as the grain of mustard seed we could say unto this immovable mountain, "Get hence!" and it would go; and all things, he says, would be possible.

Analogy of the Seed.

That being so, I want you to notice that he uses here an analogy. Plato says that all material things are but the symbols of spiritual realities. We see envisaged here in this material world but a faint shadow of that substantive world of souls to which we belong. That was a Pauline philosophy, as when he made a distinction between things seen and things unseen. And so our Lord reasons with us by analogy that visible things like seeds are like invisible experiences within the domain of the soul; what happens to the seed may by analogy be carried over and used as an interpretation of what happens to the soul.

Now take a seed, and what can you say about a seed?

The first thing you can say about it is that it has life in itself.

Pick up a grain of sand. It may glitter beautifully in the sunlight, but you know it is a dead thing. Plant it in the ground, you will never hear from it again. Instead of a grain of sand it might be a precious jewel, a diamond or a ruby worth a great deal of money. Plant it in the ground, and you will never see it again. It has not life

in itself, it is a dead thing. Like a mountain it has to be moved by something else. But a seed is different. A seed has life in itself, it has the power of reproduction.

Have you ever tried to imagine the wonder that overcame the first man that experimented with a seed; who had this tiny little thing, something that he might eat, something that he wanted, yet he said to himself, "I will put it away in the ground," and the thing comes up and reproduces itself, and instead of having one seed he has a handful? It must have been a wonderful discovery. So our Lord reminds his disciples of this significant thought, that seeds have life in themselves.

But the second thing you are obliged to say about a seed is that it has not power to realize itself alone. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die," said our Lord, "it abideth alone."

The seed needs soil: it has to be hidden away in the soil, it has to undergo a certain decomposition, to die in a sense to all external joys, and lose itself in a series of mysterious and painful transformations in a dark and lonely place.

And the third thing you can say about it is, in comparison with the soil the seed seems to be a quite insignificant thing.

Now that being true, let us see how our Lord uses this to interpret certain experiences within the soul. This analogy is offered to man that he might better understand himself.

As a seed has life in itself, so has man life in himself. That is the most wonderful thought about human nature. On our animal side we are no more than temporal, ephemeral creatures, yet we know that within this veil of flesh there is something that has the power of life eternal, something that lives forever, something that has the power of reproduction just as a seed has, which makes one single man more important than all the universe around him. We know instinctively that our individual soul is the distinctive thing in this world.

But we also know that we cannot realize ourselves by ourselves. No man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself. So all through the teaching of our Lord we are taught that we must get into the soil; we must plant ourselves in a soil that is in harmony with the reproductive principles of our own nature.

And when we come to consider that soil we see that in comparison with the soil each individual is a very insignificant thing, for the soil turns out to be the great and glorious life of God, and man's soul seems as if it were to be projected here on the background of an infinite immensity which has in itself a power, a capacity for quickening and arousing and cultivating the somnolent possibilities in our natures.

The process by which we get into the soil of life, which is the life of God, is described by our Lord as faith.

Now you can imagine a seed saying unto itself, "Oh, that I had the power to move myself a bit out of this pod-like loneliness and to get myself down to the soil!" It hears instinctively whispering to it the fructifying powers of the earth. The summer winds come and shake the plant, but do not altogether shake it out of the pod, and all the time the supreme need of the seed is to get down into the ground and die, because it does not want to abide alone. We poor cave-dwellers know very little of these things, but if you get away into the bush in spring or summer and watch nature at work all over the forest and all over the field, you seem to hear that long, mourning cry of pent-up possibility in seeds clamoring to the wind and the rain and the sun to come and deliver them from their prison house and get them into the soil. Our Lord says that if we so think of our lives as needing fresh and intimate contacts with God, our greatest desire will be to get in relation to him, and that desire he calls by the name of faith.

Now if that be true, can we not say that whatever faith is, it certainly is trust, it certainly is the appreciation of truth? But is not the very essence of faith the act of the will? Do we not know, some of us, that we have got religion enough in our heads to set up a theological universe, we have enough feeling in our hearts to furnish all the hymns that the church will need to sing, but there is something wrong with our mobility? Our whole conception of piety is static: it ought to be dynamic, it ought to be mobile. We need motion, we need activity in our life to give full expression to our thought and our desire;

and faith is the consent of the will of man to another master, even Christ. Faith is the willingness to venture upon the bare word of Christ. Just as the seed, not knowing but that birds may come and pluck it before it gets into the soil, or worms may destroy it even when it gets in, not knowing because it has no lamp to light its way into the subterranean blackness of the under soil, but believing all the time that down there somewhere in the darkness and loneliness and pain are the very elements it needs for the reproduction of itself, it prays to the wind and the rain and the sun to get it out of the pod into the ground. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Enemies of Faith.

Let me call your attention to two things in human nature that fight against this getting of the life of man into the life of God: what might be called the practical enemies of faith.

The first is this: There is a very stubborn feeling in most of our hearts about ourselves, that somehow or other it is too late for us to begin.

We are obliged, whether we like it or not, to measure our future a great deal by our past, and too often a man accepts his experience or his interpretation of his experience as the register of his possibilities. That is why when men and women reach mid-life they begin to envy the young. They say to themselves, "Oh that we were our children! Our lives certainly would be different." When we were young we could gird ourselves and go where we liked, when we are mature we are girded by another and carried where we do not like to go. And unhappily we find that the silken cords of youth, even foolish toys with which we have played, have gotten themselves somehow, in mid-life, woven into great ropes, and they seem to bind us to a destiny that we increasingly dislike, and yet from which we seem unable to separate ourselves. And whenever we hear calls like this to renewal, change, rebirth, new opportunity, there comes into our minds a question like that of Nicodemus, "How can a man be born when he is old?" How can the old heart be young again, how can vitality and vigor come to this mind that has lost many of its illusions, and that now has but that drab and painful insight into reality which will not allow it to indulge in any new illusions? And so we see how desirable it is to be renewed. What a wonderful thing it would be if we could get back those hopes and those desires that once we lost through folly; but experience tells us that we can never do it, and so that stubborn feeling about ourselves prevents us from getting out of the pod.

Do you not see that our lives today, entirely by reason of their static condition, are so exposed to the destructive forces of the world that we are in danger of decaying and losing what vitality we have? Whereas in the secret chambers of our hearts lie these great fructifying and unquickened powers which once getting into the soil of the life of God by faith may bring forth a hundredfold of good and glorious fruit.

Let me speak a word of cheer and encouragement to you. That is what Jesus came into the world to do, to help men and women who are measuring themselves by their experience to measure themselves by their hope, by the hope that he begat in their souls.

Up where I have spent many summers in Canada, our camp is right in the heart of a cedar forest, surrounded on various sides by towering pines and hemlocks, and yet we know that that is the second growth, not because it has ever been cut, but because fire has swept over it and burned the first growth. I can imagine the farmers in that bleak land saying when that fire came, "Ruin has now come upon us, for all our wood is gone!" And yet that bush is almost so thick you can hardly move through it without cutting your way, and all over the place you find not only young trees, little seedlings that have now come to maturity, but you find great trees growing out of old charred stumps; and even charred and seemingly rotten logs have begotten new shoots, and out of the old, seemingly dead wood, fire-swept, have come these living things.

I love to see in that, my friends, a parable of my life. There is such a thing as the second bloom of the soul. Have you

not known a wholesome and lovely woman in the early stages of her married life so overcome by the drudgery of housekeeping, and so beset by the problems of children, that early she lost her interest in her personal appearance and in the cultivation of her mind, and even in her church, until in the early thirties she seemed to be old before her time? Her heart would ache, and she felt herself almost done. And then there came new forces into her life, and suddenly there was a second blooming of the mind and of the soul. There came forth a fine, beautiful, mature personality. No woman ever reaches the maximum of her beauty and glory until she has reached the fortieth parallel, the second blooming of the soul and of the life.

Is there anything finer, more trustworthy, than a man who, having learned what his enemies are, has broken away from them, and because he had faith in the possibilities of the seed within his soul did courageously launch out in the face of discouraging experiences because he heard his Lord commanding it, and found himself again? Was it not said of Jesus that he was the root out of the stem of Jesse, that he sprang as a root out of dry ground?

Could anything be so arid and dry as the soul of the old Adamic life, all fine things, if not dead, held in the thrall and bitterness of sin? And then there comes this quickening voice of God speaking to the soul, "Arise, shake thy sloth off, and drop thou into this fine soil of my own nature and live again!"

So, my friends, if you feel that stubborn resistance of your experience, that old Adamic heart, saying, "How can I be born again when I am old?" listen to the voice of Christ who hoped for all men, and best of all for you, dear souls, who do not suspect the infinite richness and possible beauty of your hard pressed natures! Surely, surely, my friends, he knows how we are enslaved by this modern industrialism. He knows our struggle with doubts and fears and agonies. Surely, my friends, they are related to ourselves exactly as the malign forces of the forest are related to the exposed seed.

What we need to do is to bury ourselves more deeply by faith in the sacrificial life of God, so that our sensitive surfaces may be exposed to the life-giving powers within that purpose of God which surrounds our life like the atmosphere. If I did not believe that, I don't know what I would do with these painful discoveries of maturity, these illusions which are to us but pictures of life which we drop behind us one by one until we come upon that fine, wonderful, every-day life that God offers the soul.

There comes to mind a saying of Glover, "We must not misconceive the religion of our Lord, for Jesus believed in a workable religion that was adjusted to the life of a man with a wife and five children."

Will you think of that? A religion in these times that will work well with a man with a wife and five children is an indestructible religion. And that is exactly what Jesus offers, so that you may carry the inspiration and power of Northfield back into the humdrum, every-day life, and glorify it there, and be born again, you already regenerate souls, be reborn every day, and each morning made new by those stainless and uncorrupt mercies that greet you on the threshold of your life.

There is another thing we have to reckon with: We have got such a tight hold on the things of this life.

What bothers me is the painful inconsistencies of our people who sing about being pilgrims and strangers in this world when we are so fearfully overloaded with impedimenta. No man ever went on a pilgrimage in a Pierce-Arrow car. A pilgrim is a man who goes out alone. He has a staff in his hand, and his loins are girded up, and there is very little in his wallet, but oh, how much he has in his heart! We ought to be pilgrims, and in a sense strangers.

Now we do feel that we are strangers to this world. There are things, inchoate things, unspeakable things, things that come from God, and yet we continually defer a closer acquaintance with those to a more convenient season. So we are conscious all the time of the shrinkage of our real life, of the gradual subsidence of all those fine possibilities and promises of our youth, and yet stay as close as we possibly can to the very influences that corrupt the seed. Can you imagine a seed that had conscious-

ness enough to know it, putting itself out where a bird might find it, or putting itself constantly in such relation to the sun and rain that it would rot right there in the pod? Oh, no! The seed does everything that it can to hide itself; and what we need today in our lives is a great deal of shade, screening off our sensitiveness from the hardening influences of the world, in order that God may get hold of those sensitive elements of our nature and turn them to fruitage in the right direction.

There must be in our lives a very clear consideration of the condition, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and DIE." Ah, friends, there is the rub, to die, to lose oneself in a mere clot of trembling ooze, perchance, in some stygian blackness where somewhere and somehow fructifying powers will come to the soul! Now the urge of our age, perhaps of my life, has been to live. This is wrong. We have been trying to live, and all the time we have been losing life. Would it not be wise for us Christians now for a little while to try dying? Instead of trying to live, let us try dying! Let us try losing our lives, losing ourselves in God, in Christ! Perchance it might turn out that we would find that dying is living. That is what he said, yet we have never put it to the test.

Imagine a seed again. It talks to me sometimes in the bush, it seems so like the soul. "Oh, I do not want to get out of this pod! Oh, how nice the sun is here, how kindly it is! I hear the birds singing about me. If I go down into that ooze, something will happen to me, but I cannot tell what will happen. It is so cold and damp and lonely!"

Well, the seed falls, and in spite of its wishes it is crowded deeper into the mire; and then comes nature, and grips and tears and harrows it, and gradually breaks it into all its constituent elements until it says, "I am nothing but a handful of fragments, and my days are over!" Then suddenly there comes a coördinated something out of the very heart of it, and all those subconscious yearnings break into consciousness of life, and the little thing pushes and pushes and pushes, because it knows that up above the darkness is the light; and presently it shoots out above the soil, and crowds all its strength into that little shoot until it comes up, and then leaves out in a glorious fruitage, and it knows full surely that to die is to live!

My friends, that is the alternative you and I face today. If we are not willing to die to live, we are living to die. All over this land of ours many of our churches seem to me to be like great grain containers harassed by rats and bugs, where the grain has been eaten and fouled and corrupted and never planted. If you will not choose to die to live, all you can do is to live and die.

The Life of God.

But let us pass on to some of the details of this thing. Will you consider that this soil that Jesus is talking about is the very life of God? It means that for a spiritual being only a spiritual fellowship is fitting.

We are making an egregious blunder: we are trying to satisfy spiritual needs with material things; a platitude, I know, and yet a deadly truth. You cannot live by bread alone. You cannot possibly satisfy yourself by the accumulation of your toil. You have got to learn consciously to root your life in the life of God. So we come upon this principle: There can be no life for us without God. The soil is life because Jesus is in it.

Do you suppose we could ever have the courage to draw nigh to this mysterious influence that changes men's lives if we did not know more about God than the ancient knew? When he felt this need of planting himself he went out and looked up at the starry sky, or he looked out at the broad plains of the world, and he said to himself, "Where is this mysterious Being who made the universe? I cannot see him, nor come up with him." Some conceived him to be like themselves, and others as a vague, a formless mystery, portentous, inscrutable, and all the time besetting them behind and before with increasing fears and anxieties. And so the seed would hang there in their various philosophies, or in their various conceptions of government, and not trust itself to the soil, because it did not know whether it would ever come out of it, or not.

The soil of God is life because Jesus is

in it. Our age is trying to get rid of Jesus Christ. You young fellows in college, listen to this: You are being told in many places today that God is the important person in your life. I tell you we know no more about God apart from Jesus than the ancient mind knew of God, and what he had was infinitely more serious and morally earnest than our modern age has got. There is no God for us apart from Jesus.

But will you advance to a third position? How shall I trust myself to that living soil of God with this sinful nature of mine? There are elements of decay in my soul: worms already have been busy there in the pod, and malign forces have already begun to feed upon my nature. Dare I drop into that soil of life, even the very life of Jesus, as I am?

That question is answered in the only possible way that it can be answered, that if there can be no life for us without God, and no God without Jesus, there can be no Jesus without the cross. If our age had a proper appreciation of the moral realism of life, could realize the ineffable holiness of God, and that this world floats in a consuming fire that surrounds all lives and all things, and that only reality, only that which is like that fire, can live in it, do you suppose for one moment we could be so irreverent and so careless in our thought of God, that we could be so shy of Jesus, and so unspeakably and foolishly shy of the cross of Christ? Don't you know if it was not for the cross of Christ, and you understood God as the Jew understood him, you would flee him? As Francis Thompson said, to flee him until you could hide yourself in some cave and call on the rocks to cover you, and blot this terrible vision out of sight.

There is still something more to be said: We must take the initiative. "If ye," said Jesus, "have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove you, and it will remove."

Now the mountain is a dead thing, it is a heavy, a bulky thing, and this faith of ours is something vital, but it must rise within our own selves. Of slight or very little use is the thinking of right thoughts of God, or even right desires, so long as those thoughts and desires remain static. It must issue in the expression of the will, and produce itself in forms of splendid, intelligent activity. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed." That means you must take the initiative. So I may say a fourth thing. No life without God, no God without Jesus, no Jesus without the cross, no cross without faith!

My friends who belong to the Christian church, does not that reach you? Might it not turn out that the reason why you are but half alive today is due to the fact that you have never fully ventured to claim the life that Jesus has brought you through his regenerating and atoning love? Why should we be such poor specimens of his handiwork if the mighty God who wrought this strange and beautiful world has wrought within our own souls the very image of God in Jesus Christ? Why should we go halting and stumbling all our lives when we may know this fulness of life?

And you who are without the pale of the church, will you withhold your allegiance to him who is your Lord and Saviour? Does not this come home to you, young men and young women, who feel perplexed today, perchance more than your fathers, about yourselves? Here he stands, this stupendous and glorious personality, saying to us, "I am alive forevermore; whoso believeth in me shall have life eternal."

Can you not feel some appeal in that to all the finest elements of your own nature, those as yet unrealized ambitions and purposes which seem to be slumbering in the dormitory of your soul as Jesus stands without the door of your life and calls, "Come ye unto me, and I will give you life eternal"?

May God bring us under the spell of his grace this day!

When a Korean decides to become a Christian, he tells his friends that he has made up his mind to "do the doctrine."

This sounds something like the Chinese convert who joined the S. P. G. Mission at Peking, and made this quaint confession of faith:

"I am now reading the Bible and behaving it."

In China and in Korea they understand that the Bible is also **a book to live out.**

PERSONALIA.

The retirement through ill health of **Sir William Robertson Nicoll,** best known as editor of the "British Weekly" of London, was followed a week later by his death, on May 4.

Sir William was born in 1859 in Aberdeenshire, the son of a Free Church minister. In addition to the "British Weekly," which he founded in 1886, he also founded the "Bookman," and did an immense amount of literary work. He was unquestionably the most influential religious editor in England, and he had a large following in this country. He was knighted in 1909 in recognition of his long literary labors.

We are asked to announce that **Mr. W. R. Roberts** of the North East India General Mission and **Rev. Rhys B. Jones,** head of the Bible School at Porth, Wales, arrived in this country at the end of May on a three months' tour. Pastor O. R. Palmer of Berachah Church, Philadelphia, will be glad to hear from churches that desire their ministry.

Rev. James B. Ely, D. D., now pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Akron, Ohio, has become pastor and executive secretary of the Lake Orion Christian Union, which operates during the summer, at beautiful Lake Orion, Mich. The Lake Orion Bible Conference will be held this year from July 28 to August 6.

The first appointed missionary to reach what is now known as Japan was **Dr. B. J. Bettleheim,** a Hungarian Jew, but a naturalized English citizen. He came to the Loo Choo Islands and labored between 1846-51, translating the Gospels and Romans into simple Japanese. He came out from England under the auspices of the Loo Choo Naval Mission, headed by Lieut. Clifford, who had been to Loo Choo with Captain Basil Hall. Bettleheim seems to have spent some time in China after leaving Loo Choo, then possibly went to Chicago, Ills. He had an English wife and two fine daughters. If any reader of this magazine can put me in touch with his descendants, or with facts about his life after 1851, I will be very thankful. I would also like to locate copies of his translations. For convenience letters can be mailed to me at 1418 Coit Road, East Cleveland, Ohio, but I am a missionary in the Loo Choo Islands.—Rev. Earl R. Bull.

Dr. Cleland B. McAfee, professor of Systematic Theology in McCormick Seminary and a member of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions for eighteen years past, has been commissioned by the board to visit India, China and Japan in the winter of 1924-25 as the first lecturer upon the Joseph Cook Foundation.

Joseph Cook, the famous Monday lecturer in Tremont Temple, Boston, at his death in 1901 left his entire estate to the board, subject to the life interest of his wife. The provision of the legacy was that the income should be used to send as often as possible some outstanding Christian scholar to lecture upon faith in Jesus in the principal cities of the three countries already named. The death of Mrs. Cook a few years ago released the bequest, and it is calculated that by a year hence the accumulated income will be sufficient to send Dr. McAfee on this errand. The board of directors of McCormick Seminary has voted Prof. McAfee a year's leave of absence for this purpose.

Soul of Modern Poetry (The), by R. H. Strahan. George H. Doran Co., New York. 259 pages. $2 net.

The author takes the ground that the best poets today loyally attempt to utter and answer the ancient longing for a more perfect world, and are not sodden in materialism. In these lectures, which deal chiefly with English poets, he endeavors to exhibit the poetic view of life as found in the issues of the past 20 years. The meaning of life, the poet as creator, good and evil in poetry, futurism and the spirit of revolt, war, death and immortality, are the topics with which he deals successively. We may say that the book focuses the best points in modern English poetry, and as such it is both pleasing and significant.

Revival of Wonder (The), by Malcolm James McLeod. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 187 pages. $1.25 net.

Sixteen polished essays, religious in spirit and interest, not flowing out of Scripture texts but always concerned with Scriptural subjects. Illustrations abound from everyday life and current literature.

OUR BOOK TABLE.

Better Sunday Schools.

Building a Country Sunday School, by E. L. Middleton. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 159 pages. $1.25 net.

Mr. Middleton covers the usual ground in this handbook, and does it well. He is general secretary of the Sunday school department of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, with 14 years to his credit. Before that he was a day school and Sunday school teacher in a village. He knows the problems of which he writes, and makes no fancy suggestions, but rather workable plans within reach of the average school.

His material is well arranged, with diagrams of buildings, devices, etc.

Men's Class in Action (The), by F. Harvey Morse. George H. Doran Co., New York. 247 pages. $1.50 net.

A St. Louis business man, superintendent of a Baptist Sunday school and also of the adult division of the St. Louis County Sunday School Association, here makes a solid contribution to Sunday school literature. Attention is devoted not so much to theory as to practice, not so much to the "how" of teaching as to the "how" of making an all-around success of the class.

The standard of excellence held up for a men's class calls for these officers, with their immediate individual responsibility:

Teacher—instruction;
President—executive and religious;
Vice-president—membership increase;
Secretary—records;
Treasurer—finances;
Visitor—holding membership;
Librarian—literature;
Entertainer—social life;
Reporter—publicity.

Mr. Morse describes the kind of men needed for these offices, and offers workable suggestions for each. He gives references to other books at every step, and has the faculty of saying what he wants to say.

Organizing the Church School, by Henry Frederick Cope. George H. Doran Co., New York. 255 pages. $1.75 net.

Dr. Cope has been secretary of the Religious Education Association for twenty years. That has put him in the center of new ideas and methods of religious education, especially on the part of professors and theorists. He has incorporated the best he has heard and read about in this comprehensive scheme of religious educational activities for children and youth.

Unless the church teaches religion it will not be taught. Each church should recognize its special task by appointing a Board or Committee of Religious Education. With this start Dr. Cope works out his scheme to the last detail of organization in all departments and directions.

Teaching Adolescents in the Church School, by Erwin L. Shaver. George H. Doran Co., New York. 173 pages. $1.25 net.

A highly technical book, unfolding a method for training leaders of adolescents. Twenty different aspects of the question are given chapters, which contain reading assignments, suggestions for class discussion and for the leader, and other details intended to give a would-be teacher almost a college education in this line.

Teen-Age Tangles, by Leora M. Blanchard. Union Press, Philadelphia. 172 pages.

A warm-hearted book that comes out of the sympathetic handling of individual cases in a young people's Sunday school class, both boys and girls over 16. We admire Mrs. Blanchard's spirit as well as tact in gaining the confidence of and control over these live young people, so that she was able to prevent many slips and unhappinesses, and build up character instead.

Parents as well as teachers will gain wisdom by seeing how she did it.

Biblical Themes.

Common Sense Religion, by Frank E. Wilson. Macmillan Co., New York. 167 pages. $1.50.

A book written for the help of laymen in the church. It takes up the great doctrines and teachings of the church in such chapters as "The Church," "The Bible," "The Creed," "Sunday," "Faith," "Immortality," "Prayer," "Sacraments," "The Doctrine of Sin," "Incarnation," "Atonement," and treats them from their logical and practical side, and shows how common sense it is to believe in these verities of our Christian religion.

The author shows their practical utility. For instance, in the chapter on the creed he shows the necessity of a creed in life, not arguing for any specific creed, but that every sensible person has some kind of a creed; and he urges men to examine the same in the light of reason. For the Bible he argues its necessity from the standpoint of the need of the same outward authority for religion. He shows what the Bible is, and what it is not. He emphasizes it as a road book on life's journey.—J. H. C.

Crucifiers (The), by Lyman Abbott. Woman's Press, New York. 98 pages. 75 cents.

Meditations upon types represented at the crucifixion: the worldly-minded church member (Judas), the ambitious ecclesiastic

(Annas), the cowardly politician (Pilate), the callous profiteers (the soldiers who gambled at the foot of the cross), and the first pagan convert (the centurion).

Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin contributes a Foreword eulogistic of Dr. Abbott.

God of Our Fathers (The), by H. P. S. Fleming. H. Revell Co., New York. 156 pages. $1.25 net.

Arguments for the existence of God stated in popular language. Demonstrations and deep philosophical questions discussed in simplest terms and illustrated in attractive ways by events in daily life.

The author shows the absurdity, and the essential failure to convince or satisfy, of those isms that deny and destroy. The masses of men have never been attracted to atheism. A first cause and a first mover seem reasonable to the average man, and necessary. He maintains that the denial of God means not merely the destruction of Christianity, denial of a future life, of miracle, freewill and prayer, but government is impossible, moral law is without sanction, virtue is not its own reward, and despair descends upon the race.

His proofs of the existence of God are not so much theological as practical and elementary, and his treatment naturally comes to a close with a few pages on "Happiness in Believing."—T. C.

Larger Stewardship (The), by Charles A. Cook. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 118 pages. $1 net.

The stewardship movement of the past few years has been inclined to stress the duty of giving in a rather legalistic way. A lot of money has resulted, but it was soon seen that to be really effective and habitual the foundation of stewardship must go deeper, down to the bedrock of Christian consecration of the whole man. Mr. Cook has worked out this thought on Scriptural and practical lines, calling for the stewardship of personality, talents, calling, influence, opportunity, and time, as well as substance.

It is the first comprehensive book on the subject we have seen.

Our Faith in God through Jesus Christ, by J. Ernest Davey. George H. Doran Co., New York. 139 pages. $1.75 net.

These addresses, scholarly and popular in form, were delivered in Belfast before the Student Christian movement, and are an "untheological treatment of the more persistent doubts in the mental atmosphere of our day."

They ask four questions about the conception of God given us by our Lord. The author first states what in his judgment that conception of God is, and then proceeds to answer the four questions, which he maintains are each and all vital to a satisfactory answer to the whole problem. His answer certainly should prove convincing and inevitable to intelligent and inquiring minds, especially to students.

The questions are, Is the Christian conception of God reasonable, necessary, effective, and final?

The writer never begs the question, but faces the difficulties and meets them with a keenness of intellect, a warmth of sympathy, and an understanding of young men which only one alive to world conditions and in closest touch with university life can have.—T. C.

Pearls from Patmos, by J. J. Ross. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 231 pages. $1.50 net.

The first three chapters of Revelation are expounded in this book. Some 70 pages are occupied with the first chapter, which is divided into thirteen sections. In the case of chapters 2 and 3 the plan is to present the corresponding parts of each of the seven letters under successive heads,—their author, commendations, complaints, counsels, promises, and conclusion.

Dr. Ross intersperses a good many personal and pastoral anecdotes in the course of the exposition, making the book readable as well as illuminative. The Bible text is taken at its face value, and the reader is spared unprofitable discussions.

Year in John's Gospel (A), by Annie Richardson Kennedy. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 374 pages. $2 net.

Devotional studies for every day in the year selected from the Gospel of John. First there is a topical title, then a Scripture portion, sometimes only a verse, occasionally a whole chapter, taken in order. An explanatory comment follows, then a prayer.

The spirit is fine throughout, and the plan is such as to insure rich food for meditation.

Fiction.

Captain Pluck, by Isla May Mullins. George H. Doran Co., New York. 235 pages. $1.50 net.

Captain Pluck is the name applied to the boy who is the hero of the story, which might be the real biography of the son of a preacher-planter of the old South, later moving to Texas. Incidents are narrated in short, fast-moving chapters. The prayer of the parents at the boy's birth, that he might become a preacher, is happily realized in the last chapter.

Marriage Verdict (The), by Frank H. Spearman. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 321 pages. $2.

Another of these novels making capital out of an unhappy marriage and sex sins in

rich society. The woman turns Roman Catholic, and the bishop clears the way for her to marry again after divorce by "St. Paul's law":

"When one party to a pagan marriage becomes a Christian, she is bound by natural justice to live with her pagan partner as his wife, provided that the partner permits the untrammeled practice of her religion, and does not compel her or tempt her to lead a sinful life. But St. Paul required that on these points the Christian spouse, before breaking the bond between them, should interpellate her husband."

We wonder if it was the author who thought up this peculiarly Jesuitical device.

Unbidden Guest (The), by Silvio Villa. Macmillan Co., New York. 282 pages, illustrated. $2.

A pleasing narrative in the form of reminiscences of a man who came from Italy and made a business success in New York. The romanticism and idealism of the Italian mind does not die, but is cast over his boyhood scenes and experiences, then his coming to America, his love story, and further experiences in Italy during the war.

It is a book to read slowly and meditatively, and it will afford an acquaintance of a scheme of life worth living, though so unAmerican.

United Study Textbooks.

Child and America's Future (The), by Jay S. Stowell. Missionary Education Movement, New York. 182 pages, illustrated. 50 and 75 cents.

America's greatest asset is her boys and girls. With this fact in mind the author examines every aspect of childhood and youth. He discusses their health, and how it ought to be fostered; their play and work, and how these ought to be safeguarded; their education, and how conditions ought to be improved; their Christian nurture in the home and schools of various sorts. Still with the children in mind, the future calls for a healthier and more intelligent America, for better religious training and better provisions for using leisure time, for a sense of social responsibility which finds its clearest interpretation in terms of Christian stewardship, and for a true sense of world fellowship with all peoples under the sun.

The illustrations depict young people of different races in town and country, their needs and the facilities placed at their disposal.

Creative Forces in Japan, by Galen M. Fisher. Missionary Education Movement, New York. 248 pages, illustrated. 50 and 75 cents.

Mr. Fisher has written a most readable story of Japan. There is enough of historical data to give an American reader a grasp of the past in its outstanding features. There is a sympathetic and balanced survey of the assets and liabilities of the Japanese people, their strong points and weak or wanting, to help the reader feel better acquainted with their mentality and virtues and make-up. National changes from militarism to the present liberalism, also social and religious matters, receive due consideration. Of course the vicissitudes of Christian missions from the 16th century effort of Francis Xavier down to today are recorded. A closing chapter on "The Challenge of Today and Tomorrow" summarizes present problems and prospects.

An appendix gives supplementary quotations and statistics for each chapter. The illustrations picture people and places to enforce Mr. Fisher's story.

Various Themes.

America and the World Liquor Problem, by Ernest Hurst Cherrington. American Issue Press, Westerville, O. 182 pages.

Arguments and facts are marshalled in a survey of the world liquor problem, with special emphasis upon America's position and power of example and influence in achieving world prohibition. Angles of the question are discussed which would not occur to the uninformed citizen. The international aspect is in view all the time.

The tone of the book is temperate and positive. The writer shows himself to be well posted, and presents his case effectively. Dr. Cherrington is secretary of the World League against Alcohol.

Evolution of the Country Community (The), by Warren H. Wilson. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 259 pages. $2.25.

The age of theology in the church is said to have passed, at least as the exclusive or outstanding characteristic of the church. Service is the slogan of the hour: social service.

This book regards the church as one eye of the community, the school being the other eye. The condition of the church is an index to the social and economic condition of the people; it is the best institution for building and organizing and inspiring country life. Starting from this ground the author gives a most valuable presentation of the subject of community betterment: not alone in common worship, but in the schools, public health, recreation, morals, and other aspects of community life. He is master of his subject in its historical evolution, and will unquestionably be found of great help by the country minister and all who work for the highest interests of their neighborhood.

New Testament in Modern Education (The), by J. Morgan Jones. George H. Doran Co., New York. 303 pages. $3.50 net.

The modern teacher is seeking honest guidance, based on reverent scholarship, in interpreting and applying the New Testament. This book claims to be "a scientific and comprehensive discussion of the educational value of the New Testament in the light of modern study."

The author, who is a professor in the Independent College, Bangor, and has served as an extension lecturer, as well as in other useful public capacities, declares that the science and art of religious education are still in their infancy, and that while educational methods have been elaborated, the content and material of moral instruction have been comparatively neglected; which is unfortunate, as how we teach must depend upon what we want to teach,—rather, we should say, on what there is to teach. "Our very right to live comfortably in the modern world as distinguished from the Middle Ages," says Prof. Jones, depends on our attitude to the history and literature of an ancient Semitic race, and on "the fugitive writings of a little group of Hellenistic religious enthusiasts of the first century."

The aim of this book is to mediate between the Biblical expert and the educational thinker. Opinions may differ as to the validity (or the depth) of its distinctively "higher critical" criticism, but it certainly will help to give readers a more vivid appreciation of the specific educational values of the New Testament in relation to the needs and interests of the modern world, and in a real sense the Bible of yesterday and the day before must be the Bible of today. Up-to-dateness in this vital sense is a marked characteristic of this timely book.

The educational treatment of the New Testament involves two aspects: a descriptive study interpreting the documents historically as material once used by early missionaries, and an inquiry as to how far the Christian teacher today can utilize the same material for the purpose of making disciples in this century. Under the head of teaching the New Testament Prof. Jones considers as pressing problems the life of Jesus for childhood, the synoptic presentation of Christ for adolescence, teaching the parables, the problem of the miracles, the birth and resurrection of Jesus, the apostle Paul and his letters, the Johannine literature, thought and life, and Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. He does not deny the birth-stories about Jesus, but holds that there could be no more convincing proof of the tremendous impression made by the personality of Jesus upon the early disciples, and of their faith that he was divine in some sense, than the circulation of these stories of his origin, even if they were survivals of the "primitive wonderland of religion," for their true function is to bring "the growing soul face to face with Jesus himself and his religious value."

Bibliographies of works, some of them quite radical, bearing on this general subject of religion and education, are added by Prof. Jones, who, on the whole, while evidently sympathetic with some aspects of modernism has supplied in this volume a discussion both authoritative and inspiring.—C. A. S. D.

Parties and Stunts, by Era Betzner. Woman's Press, New York. 94 pages. $1.

This attractively gotten up book contains comprehensive programs for parties for the various seasons and holidays throughout the year. In addition, it contains a number of good stunts, also "Games for Getting Partners." The "Programs" include decorations, invitations and refreshments as well as the entertainment suitable for the occasion.

Traffic Game. From "Story Plays."

Story Plays, by Louise C. Wright. A. S. Barnes and Co., New York. 127 pages, illustrated. $1.60.

Something new—to the reviewer, at least,—for those who have to occupy and entertain children of the first and second grades.

About a hundred games are suggested. By "Story Play" is meant that the children act out a story. Take "Winter Play." They are taught to pretend they are skating, walking in deep snow, looking at icicles on trees and reaching for them, warming their hands and feet. Under

each "pretend" they are put through appropriate motions of body, hands, feet, etc. In this way they get quite a little exercise.

The variety of stories increases their knowledge and educates their imagination. There are seasonal games, plays imitating home and industrial activities, plays suitable for patriotic and other occasions like Thanksgiving and Christmas, games imitating aeroplanes, birds and animals, and what not. The picture illustrates the "Traffic Game," in which children are taught to understand and obey traffic signals by pretending they are street cars, autos, and pedestrians.

The author is assistant supervisor of Physical Education in the public schools of Cleveland, O., and all her suggestions have been tested in her own experience. They are very clever.

Three to Make Ready, by Louise Ayres Garnett. George H. Doran Co., New York. 194 pages. $1.50 net.

Ten Minutes by the Clock, by Alice D. Riley. George H. Doran Co., New York. 216 pages. $1.50 net.

These books are issued under the auspices of the Drama League of America, Junior Department, and so represent the best in plays for young people and amateurs, whether for indoor or outdoor production. The book first named contains three plays, the other four plays. They incorporate original ideas intended to appeal to and satisfy the dramatic instincts of young people. A chapter on the production of such plays is printed at the end of each book.

The Drama League foresees a large and useful future for its junior department, and thinks that every community theater should give part of its program to the junior constituency, while in large cities a children's playhouse is a possibility.

That Friday Night, by John Timothy Stone. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 24 pages. 30 cents.

A tasty pamphlet, telling the story of a down-and-out youth who was gripped by the sacrifice of Calvary as heard in 1917 in Dr. Stone's church. He enlisted for the war, and came back to take his place as a new man in church and society.

LATEST BOOKS RECEIVED.

Armour of Youth (The), by Walter Russell Bowie. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 175 pages. $1.25 net.

Beloved Disciple (The), by Alfred E. Garvie. George H. Doran Co., New York. 267 pages. $2 net.

Birth of the Bible (The), by Theodore Heysham. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 172 pages. $1.50 net.

Business of Living (The), by L. D. Anderson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 254 pages. $1.60 net.

Caste and Outcast, by Dhan Gopal Mukerji. E. P. Dutton Co., New York. 303 pages. $3.

Coming King (The), by William Evans. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 244 pages. $1.50 net.

Contacts with Non-Christian Cultures, by Daniel Johnson. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 189 pages. $2 net.

Economic Imperialism, by Achille Viallate. Macmillan Co., New York. 180 pages. $2.

Friendship Indispensable (The), by Charles E. Jefferson. Macmillan Co., New York. 88 pages. 75 cents.

Inspiration, by Nolan Rice Best. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 160 pages. $1.25 net.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit, by Avery A. Shaw. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 119 pages. $1 net.

Language of Nature (The), by Theodore Mead. "Our Hope," New York. 130 pages. $1.

Over 80 pages are taken up with meticulous information about bees, chiefly the honey bee, the same being paralleled by Bible references and thus intended to convey moral and religious truth. Salt, geometry, corn and wheat, and other elements in nature receive shorter treatment of the same kind. The alleged types and teachings seem to be rather far-fetched in many cases, but that is for the individual to say.

Long Ago in Galilee, by Muriel Clark. Carney Press, London, England. 101 pages, with frontispiece. 2/10.

Mustard Seed in Japan (A), by William Merrell Voiries. Omi Mission, Omi-Hachiman, Japan. 158 pages.

New Testament Sociology, by Philip Vollmer. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 319 pages. $2.25 net.

Old Memories, by Henry Jones. George H. Doran Co., New York. 227 pages. $1.35 net.

Our Common Faith: A Symposium. George H. Doran Co., New York. 136 pages. $1.25 net.

Personal Immortality, by A. Gordon James. George H. Doran Co., New York. 148 pages. $1.50 net.

Place of the Gospel in the Development of Humanity (The), by Benjamin J. Radford. Standard Publishing Company, Cincinnati, O. 117 pages. $1.

Red Man in the United States (The), by G. E. E. Lindquist. George H. Doran Co., New York. 461 pages. $3.50 net.

Saint Paul on Christian Unity, by John B. Cowden. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 208 pages. $1.50 net.

Simon of Cyrene, by Thomas Hall Shastid. George Wahr, Ann Arbor, Mich. 446 pages. $3 net.

Song at Sunrise (The), by William Russell Owen. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 153 pages. $1.25 net.

Threshold (The), by M. W. A. Macmillan Co., New York. 239 pages. $2.

To Start the Day, by John Timothy Stone. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 194 pages. $1.50 net.

What Is A Christian? by James E. Clarke. Advance Publishing Co., Nashville, Tenn. 80 pages. 75 and 50 cents.

What Is Mysticism? by Charles M. Addison. Macmillan Co., New York. 34 pages. 75 cents.

What Is True Religion? by Robert J. MacAlpine. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 206 pages. $1.50 net.

Christian Fellowship, by Nathan Soderblom. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 212 pages. $1.50 net.

Any book acknowledged, reviewed, or advertised in this magazine will be forwarded postpaid by the publishers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK upon receipt of the advertised price. Remit by check, postal or express order, or by currency. Do not send stamps.

GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE BIBLE.

International Sunday School Lessons.

July 1. John the Baptist.

Lesson portion, Luke 3. 3-8; 7. 24-28.

In making a survey of John the Baptist's life, read again these passages:

Luke 1. 5-80. His birth foretold and fulfilled.

John was the only prophet whose birth and mission were foretold. His story begins before his birth, and is marked by the reappearance of miracle. If ever a man was well born it was he. Zachariah and Elisabeth were a godly old couple, righteous before God and blameless before men: the Bible says so. John was the child of their prayers. He was to be "filled with the Holy Spirit" (15). Note other aspects of his character and work spoken of by Gabriel and Zachariah.

Luke 3. 1-20. His public ministry.

For 400 years heaven has been silent, but at last we read again the old prophetic formula, "The word of the Lord came." Thirty years have passed by without a word about John, but now God finds him in the wilderness, gives him his message, and brings him to the region round about Jordan.

He makes religion real, transparent. He has one text, "Repent!" By repentance he means something that changes character, that leads to amendment of life, that prepares for the coming of Messiah. Also he preaches judgment: the axe laid to the root of the tree, the worthless branch cut down and burnt. What a revival that was!

To correct the expectation of the people he draws a comparison between himself and Messiah. Like a faithful servant he exalts his Master.

Luke 3. 21, 22. His baptism of Jesus.

John 1. 6-37. His witness to Jesus.

Luke 7. 18-23. Questioning Jesus.

John has been in prison for some months, but news of the works done by Jesus filter through to him. But surely this is not the One he proclaimed! Where are the axe, the fan, the fire? Is Jesus really the Coming One, or only another forerunner?

Our Lord met John's question very considerately. He did not send a verbal answer, but left John's disciples to draw their own conclusions from the facts they witnessed. The very works which perplexed John were in truth the proofs of Messiahship (John 5. 36; Acts 2. 22).

If our Lord has any rebuke for John it is clothed in a benediction.

Luke 7. 24-28. Lord Jesus' testimony to John.

When the messengers have gone, our Lord turns to the crowd and eulogizes John in a glowing tribute to his character and work. "Yet he that is but little in the kingdom of God is greater than he." How so? Because greater in knowledge of and communion with God, in opportunity and privilege, in possibility of power and work; but not greater in character, fidelity, courage, self-sacrifice, humility, devotion to his mission.

Mark 6. 14-29. Murdered!

Take a concordance and glance over other references to John: it will repay you. For instance, Luke 11. 1 intimates that he was a man of prayer; Acts 19. 3, 4 gives a suggestion of the wide permeation of his teaching,—here are disciples of his away off in Ephesus after twenty years or more!

A few John the Baptists are wanted today to compel needed social reforms and produce evangelical conviction of sin. They too must be "filled with the Holy Spirit" to do thorough and permanent work.

July 8. Mary the Mother of Jesus.

Lesson portion, Luke 2. 41-52.

The excessive glorification of the Virgin Mary by the Roman Catholic church no doubt influenced the leaders of the Protestant Reformation to shrink from a just appreciation of her place in God's purposes. There is no reason why we should not study her life and character so far as revealed in the Bible.

One may be surprised that so little is told of her. It is plain that she was not a forward, ambitious woman who might have pushed herself into the career of her illustrious Son. We do not find any eulogy of her by our Lord.

The glimpses we get of her in the Gospels show her to have been a woman of normal character and action. She wore no halo. Her greatness lies in her uniqueness. Think what it meant to be the virgin mother of God's only-begotten Son!

As such she was the subject of prophecy seven centuries before,—Isaiah 7. 14.

First appearances in Luke 1 and 2, Matthew 1 and 2.

Her first appearances in Luke 1 command our respect and admiration. Nothing is told of her parents, but the offering of pigeons at her purification implies that she was poor. It will require the instincts and experiences of a woman and mother to interpret the intimacies of this chapter. We note Mary's modesty, self-possession, acquiescence in the will of God (38). Gabriel's salutation troubled her. Later,

when she and Elisabeth shared their sacred confidences, her reticence and reserve gave way to an outburst of joy and praise in the Magnificat.

Mary's quality as a mother is to be ascertained from the character of her Son.

It has been pointed out that every time Mary appears in the subsequent narrative it is to receive a thrust of pain. Is this the "sword" that Simeon spoke of (Luke 2. 35)?

Her Son's first Passover, Luke 2. 42-52.

We see her anxiety as she seeks the missing boy; her astonishment at finding him in the Temple under such circumstances; her question, implying a trace of annoyance, perhaps. Did his reply not "pierce her heart" as he gently rebuked their failure to seek for him in the most natural place after the training they had given him, and as he bespoke his deity and his higher duty to his heavenly Father?

But the flash of the divine passes, and Jesus returns home and continues to be "subject" to his parents at an age when he had now passed out of their exclusive tutelage and had become a son of the Law.

Other references.

John 2. 1-11. The marriage at Cana. Since Joseph is not mentioned it is thought that Mary is now a widow, dependent upon her firstborn son. It was natural for her to turn to him, then, in an emergency. Our Lord's reply to her was not so harsh as it sounds in English, nor did Mary receive it as such; nevertheless, it implied separation, non-interference, another piercing of the mother's heart.

Matthew 12. 46-50. What must this further loosening of the human relationship have meant to Mary?

Luke 11. 27, 28. Again the personal is forgotten in the spiritual.

John 19. 25-27. At the cross. Crucifixion was always terrible, but when the victim was her son! How sorely must Mary's heart have been pierced at this tragic and early ending of his life and career! Had he failed in his mission? Note his tender provision for her.

Mary is not mentioned among the women at the tomb, nor among those to whom the risen Lord appeared. Our last view of her is on her knees among the disciple band in Acts 1. 14.

All motherhood has been ennobled in being chosen in Mary as the medium for God to become man.

July 15. Simon Peter.

Lesson portion, Matthew 16. 13-18, 21-23; John 21. 15-17.

A survey of Peter's life calls for a survey of the Scripture record beginning at Matthew 4. 18 and running to Acts 15, with a few further scattered references, and the two epistles of Peter.

The lesson portion takes in four aspects which may serve as a workable outline for a survey of Peter's life.

Matthew 16. 13-16. Peter's confession of Christ.

It is at the close of our Lord's Galilean ministry. For the first time he quizzes the disciples about himself. What opinions do the people hold about him?

The answer yields a composite picture, combining the characteristics of different prophets, yet incomplete and uncertain. What about their own opinions? Peter speaks up, acknowledging Jesus' Messiahship and deity. Think what that meant for a Jew! Think what it meant for Jesus!

Of course this was not a sudden thought, but represented convictions formed as the disciples had observed their Master's life and heard his words.

Matthew 16. 17, 18. Peter commended by Christ.

But divine revelation was the source of Peter's assurance. That is an important declaration regarding any man.

Our Lord's next word about the "rock" on which he would build his church is one of the disputed passages upon which men will never come to agreement. The Roman Catholic church sees in it the primacy and uniqueness of Peter which is the basis of the papal claim. Some consider his confession of Jesus' deity the foundation of the Christian church, the irreducible creed. Others, that Christ himself is the rock (petra) of which Peter (petros) is a part. Read 1 Peter 2. 4-8.

Matthew 16. 21-23. Peter rebuked by Christ.

Peter's confession was a turning point in Christ's career. Now he sets his face toward Jerusalem and the cross.

A moment ago we saw Peter at his best; now at his worst. Perhaps his presumption was born of well-meaning love and loyalty, it was so impossible for a Jew to think of Messiah suffering humiliation and death. However that was, it called forth the sharpest rebuke ever given to a disciple. No stumblingblock could be permitted in the way of God's purposes regarding Messiah.

John 21. 15-17. Peter's restoration to service.

Recall Peter's denial of our Lord. His earlier personal interview with the living Lord restored him to discipleship. This episode restores him to service.

It is a different Peter. He is more subdued. He will not profess love of the quality that Christ spoke of,—divine love (agapein),—but only a fondness, a love of lesser degree (philein). The third time our Lord uses Peter's word; he will accept

what Peter offers. Note that Peter relied not upon his own assertion but upon our Lord's omniscience.

With this motive of warm-hearted affection for our Lord himself Peter went forward in his apostolic labors. That he never forgot the lesson is seen in his epistles; for instance, 1 Peter 5. 2-4.

July 22. John the Apostle.

Lesson portion, Luke 9. 49-56; John 19. 25-27; 1 John 4. 7, 8.

John the apostle was one of the first pair to accept Jesus as Messiah, for we may surely assume that the unnamed disciple of John 1. 35-39 was himself. And just as Andrew went after Peter and told him of his find (40, 41), may we not also imagine that John went after his own brother James and brought him to Christ?

Scholars are agreed that John lived almost to the end of the first century. This is the man, then, whose life we survey today: first to follow Jesus, last of the apostolic band to survive.

John contributed more to the New Testament than any writer except Paul and Luke. In the Gospel he hides himself under the phrase "The disciple whom Jesus loved." What preëminence is implied in this expression! First a disciple, then one of the XII, then of the inner circle of three, and finally our Lord's most intimate friend on earth!

Perhaps this intimacy with Christ, and the long years of experience and contemplation that passed before he wrote, account for the spiritual, mystical conception and tone in John's Gospel. In the epistles he opens his heart to his children in the faith, and in the Revelation we get the record of his visions and prophecy looking toward the coming of Christ and the end of all things.

The passages for today's lesson reveal two aspects of John's temperament: not at the same time, however. On one hand, exclusiveness, vindictiveness; on the other, tenderness, love. The former passed away under the teaching and influence of Christ, who thought John worthy, in spite of faults, of his closest affection.

Luke 9. 49, 50. Exclusiveness.

Our Lord has just given the XII a lesson in humility (verses 46-48), and made receiving a child in his name the same as receiving himself. John is reminded of having stopped a person working in Christ's name because he was not a recognized follower of Christ. While this need not imply meanness on John's part, it shows an exclusiveness, a "closed shop" and sectarian spirit, which our Lord corrects.

Do we not need this lesson continually? There are many today in the church who would forbid others who also believe and work in the name of Christ, but who do not see eye to eye with them in all beliefs. What would our Lord say? We must be loyal without being bigoted and narrow.

Luke 9. 51-56. Vindictiveness.

This time our Lord administers a direct rebuke. John flares up with resentment against the inhospitality of the Samaritans, and is eager for vengeance. His fiery zeal and temper must be controlled, directed. Later John accompanies Peter to Samaria, prays with Philip's converts, and lays hands upon them for the receiving of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8. 14-17). What had made the change of heart?

"Let us never," says Bishop Tillotson, "do anything for religion which is contrary to religion."

John 19. 25-27. Filial tenderness.

John, at least, of the XII, followed Jesus all the way to Calvary, and relieved him of the burden of his mother's future.

1 John 4. 7, 8. Love.

These verses epitomize John's ripened teaching as an old man. How believers today need to make his words their own! Mutual love has its source in God. To know God is the heart of Christianity, and God is love.

July 29. Matthew the Publican.

Lesson portion, Matthew 9. 9-13; Luke 5. 27-32.

All we know of Matthew is his call, his being listed among the XII, and the Gospel traditionally attributed to him. Mark and Luke give him the name Levi.

His call.

His call, so briefly told in today's lesson, is a model of conversion.

Here is a man whose vocation makes him an outcast among fellow Jews: he is a tax-collector or customs-officer at Capernaum, on the route between Damascus and the Mediterranean. Whether he had heard or observed Jesus before, or not, we do not know. This day, as our Lord passes by his booth he summons Matthew to follow him. There is the immediate decision of will, "forsook all"; then prompt action to suit, "rose up"; and the beginning of life-long loyalty, "followed him."

Matthew's job enabled him to get rich, and Luke 5. 29 makes it clear that he got up a great celebration in his house, inviting a great number of publicans and other friends. Evidently Matthew's "conversion" was thorough and whole-hearted, and he wanted his friends to know it, and to meet Jesus for themselves.

Here, then, we see how our Lord added a business man to the apostolic band, the representative of an extensive unchurched underworld in society. Nothing is said in

the scanty record of his change of heart: his vocation gave him opportunity for extortion, dishonesty, injustice, which he left behind with his money-making prospects.

His Gospel.

The Gospel of Matthew reflects some light upon the author.

He must have been a keen Bible student, for he makes frequent note of fulfilled prophecies.

If his race pride was weak in becoming a tax-gatherer, he now becomes a nationalist in his outlook, depicting Jesus as Messiah, king of the Jews.

His business training perhaps made him methodical as a biographer of Christ, for the Gospel groups teachings together, as in the Sermon on the Mount and the parables of the kingdom in chapter 13.

If the teacher has time, he might review the contents of this Gospel, recalling those parts that are peculiar to Matthew, and reciting well known verses like "Come unto me."

"Follow me" is still the direct, practical call of Christ.

It costs ALL to follow Christ; and it is worth it.

Suppose Lord Jesus should visit you at your place of business?

SELECTED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

(*Learn a Text a Day.*)

JULY, 1923.

SUNDAY, 1st. *Full of power by the Spirit of the Lord. Micah 3. 8 (R. V.).*

Hurry is the born enemy of all harvesting of power in human life. Let us begin the day leisurely in the power of the Holy Ghost, for the Holy Ghost is the enemy of all hurry. Whenever you see a man in a hurry, that man is just so much minimizing the power of the Spirit in his life.—John Douglas Adam.

MONDAY, 2nd. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Jeremiah 31. 3.*

Get up into the high mountains, believing children of God, and view the everlasting love of your Father toward you in Jesus! Recount all that that love has brought for you before you had any being! Is it likely to drop you now because of any unworthiness it perceives?—F. B. Meyer.

TUESDAY, 3rd. *The Lord shall guide thee continually. Isaiah 58. 11.*

The bells of Westminster Abbey chime hourly a sweet, simple melody. The words allied to the tune are these:

All through this hour,
Lord, be my guide,
And through thy power
No foot shall slide!

WEDNESDAY, 4th. *Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God! Philippians 4. 6.*

In prayer the most important thing is to catch the ear of him to whom I speak. Do not offer one petition until you are fully conscious of having secured the attention of God! You need to have your heart filled by the Spirit with the holy consciousness that the everlasting, almighty God is indeed come very near you.—Andrew Murray.

THURSDAY, 5th. *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for thou art the God of my salvation: on thee do I wait all the day! Psalm 25. 5.*

Waiting upon God will give thee ample strength to keep pace with the swiftest and most exacting circumstances. Waiting upon God will give thee power to go slowly on a tedious road, because when thou art walking the bleak, cold way, thou shalt walk it in the wonderful companionship of thy God.—J. H. Jowett.

FRIDAY, 6th. *I am the Lord thy God . . . . which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.' Isaiah 48. 17.*

God's leading is none the less real because it comes to us in quiet ways, and seems just the natural activity of our minds. His work in nature is through its operations, not over them, and in our lives he works within our spirits. We are constantly erring in our search for some external leading of God.—Robert E. Speer.

SATURDAY, 7th. *Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 1 Corinthians 3. 13.*

Labor and serve, toil on and work, remembering that day in which before his judgment-seat the hidden things will become manifest!

SUNDAY, 8th. *Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5. 25-27.*

The world could never stand before such a church. So if we want to see men saved, let us pray first for such a church!—B. Carradine.

MONDAY, 9th. *Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. Hebrews 12. 28.*

May the blessed hope produce this in our lives: acceptable service, with reverence and godly fear.

TUESDAY, 10th. *I have chosen you . . . . that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. John 15. 16.*

Christ is the living Vine, the source of our supply. But he bears his fruit through us. He needs us for fruit-bearing as surely as we need him for life. There is a profound sense in which he cannot get along without us.—James H. McConkey.

WEDNESDAY, 11th. *Here am I! Isaiah 6. 8.*

I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. What I can do, I ought to do, and what I ought to do, by the grace of God I will do!

THURSDAY, 12th. *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. 2 Corinthians 8. 1, 2.*

We do so little good because we have little resource. We dream of the vast things we should have accomplished with talent and fortune. Yet is not the whole history of Christianity designed to teach the contrary idea,—the wealth of the poor, the power of the feeble?—W. L. Watkinson.

FRIDAY, 13th. *There standeth one among you whom ye know not. John 1. 26.*

Wonder of wonders it must have been to the great heart of Christ that men should be reading about him in their Scriptures and not recognize him!—Joseph Parker.

SATURDAY, 14th. *Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat! Job 23. 3.*

Go on seeking, for it is dangerous to be without the Lord! With thine whole heart seek him, and he will be found of thee! Only give thyself thoroughly to the search, and verily thou shalt discover him to thy joy and gladness!—C. H. Spurgeon.

SUNDAY, 15th. *I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy. Ecclesiastes 8. 10.*

The saddest road to hell is that which runs under the pulpit, past the Bible, and through the midst of warnings and invitations.—Bishop Ryle.

MONDAY, 16th. *I am the Lord that healeth thee. Exodus 15. 26.*

When you are sick, and flat on your back, perhaps God has placed you in that position that you may look up into his face.—David J. Ferris.

TUESDAY, 17th. *God . . . . hath . . . . given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Philippians 2. 9, 10.*

His is the name which at once identifies him with human nature and sets him high over all as the Saviour of the needy. Just to breathe it softly in the hour of danger is to be reinforced unto resistance and victory. It is our defense and shield in every conflict, our confidence in every perplexity, our peace in every storm.—J. Stuart Holden.

WEDNESDAY, 18th. *They looked unto him, and were radiant. Psalm 34. 5.*

Would you not like to be a radiant Christian? You may be. Spend time in prayer! You cannot be a radiant Christian in any other way.—R. A. Torrey.

THURSDAY, 19th. *Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Psalm 68. 31.*

What a privilege it is to be called to give oneself or one's best to such service! What a privilege to be allowed in any way to share in bringing the gospel of Christ for the first time to the tribes and peoples who are so eagerly asking for Christian teachers, in the populous unevangelized lands committed to our trust! We must remember that it was not by interceding in glory for the world that Jesus saved us: he gave himself. Our prayers for the evangelization of the world are a bitter irony so long as we give of our superfluity and shrink from the sacrifice of ourselves.—Lucy Guinness Kumm.

FRIDAY, 20th. *Come, Lord Jesus! Revelation 22. 20.*

Our Saviour emphatically said, When the gospel is preached everywhere, then shall the end come. I do not fully comprehend the implications of that tremendous word, but this I believe, that the Christ who seems to many so weak and thwarted and neglected shall reveal himself as the Lord of power and glory. The end may be far distant, be it so, still we can hasten it by the word of our testimony. The needful thing is to increase the volume of testimony until it covers the world as the waters cover the sea.—Harris E. Kirk.

SATURDAY, 21st. *He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again. Proverbs 19. 17.*

The soul that gives is the soul that lives;
And bearing another's load
Doth lighten your own, and shorten the way,
And brighten the homeward road.
—Washington Gladden.

SUNDAY, 22nd. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Matthew 5. 6.*

Hungry and thirsty people are not critical and fault-finding at the table. It is the person with capricious appetite that is so difficult to please. The hungry man sits down without a word, and helps himself until he is satisfied. Spiritually hungry people do not lose time in quibbling over words, theories or distinctions. They are not captious about methods and men. They are hungry, and want all that God has for them. How easy it is to lead such people into the sanctifying grace of God!—B. Carradine.

MONDAY, 23rd. *Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. Proverbs 27. 1.*

Life's uncertainties give us a new hold upon the everlasting.—Mark Guy Pearse.

TUESDAY, 24th. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Romans 1. 18.*

Do not let us confuse a mere knowledge of the truth with an experience of its power in our lives! Do not let us mistake mere light for life! And do not let us suppose that because we are orthodox, we are thereby necessarily in company with Jesus Christ!—J. Stuart Holden.

WEDNESDAY, 25th. *Their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven. 2 Chronicles 30. 27.*

Well, it will be wonderful there with the Master. But remember this, that we are on the battlefield here, and every prayer uttered on the battlefield has peculiar power, because it directly interferes with and hinders the power of the Evil One. Let us rejoice that we are on the earth, and stay here by his grace just as long as we can, for this is the place of power in prayer, because it is the place of conflict!—S. D. Gordon.

THURSDAY, 26th. *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Colossians 4. 2.*

"Watch and pray." Being on the watch often changes the character of our prayers. We blunder along, and fall, and have to pray for forgiveness. Had we been watchful, it would have been a prayer for help, then praise for victory. Is not the prayer to be forearmed better than the prayer to be forgiven?—Maltbie D. Babcock.

FRIDAY, 27th. *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. Isaiah 54. 17.*

There is only one man can do you injury of a permanent kind, and that man is yourself. If you are right with God your enemies will only be creating opportunities for you. Have no fear, true soul; thine inheritance is fixed by the Lord!—Joseph Parker.

SATURDAY, 28th. *Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler. Psalm 91. 3.*

God delivers his people from the snare of the fowler in two senses: from, and out of. He delivers them from the snare, does not let them enter into it, and if they should be caught therein he delivers them out of it. The first promise is more precious to some, the second is the best to others.—C. H. Spurgeon.

SUNDAY, 29th. *If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Romans 8. 25.*

It is a great thing to wait in patience. Often our hearts cry out, "How long, O Lord?" May we remember our Lord also patiently waits upon the Father's throne.

MONDAY, 30th. *I being in the way, the Lord led me. Genesis 24. 27.*

But, my brother, you will have to trust him. If a man is going to walk with God, he has to venture everything. And don't forget that the man who trusts God that way is the man that God can trust. When we once cut the last shore rope, and have just swung clean out upon him and his will, then he will begin to tell us his secret, to reveal his way, to commit commissions to us, to trust us.—G. Campbell Morgan.

TUESDAY, 31st. *I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise. Romans 1. 14.*

Paul was one of the greatest men the world has known. Some consider him the greatest, and rank him next to that matchless One who was divine as well as human. Surely it is worth while to dscover his secret, to get at his explanation. Here it is: "I am debtor." That was all. It was quite sufficient. "I am debtor," and therefore all the rest.—James I. Vance.

Next Month.

Conscience in Relation to Christian Faith, Rev. J. Stuart Holden, D. D.
The 46th Psalm, Rev. Frederic C. Spurr.
What is Truth? Rev. W. Y. Fullerton.
On Taking Note and Notes, Rev. Fred Smith.
The Revival Movement in Belfast, Rev. R. M. L. Waugh.

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TO THE TEACHER.

Rev. H. B. Hartzler.

Go, speak to Jesus first,
Then to the child! Go, let him speak to thee,
Who taught on earth in Judah's waning days,
On mountain slopes, along the pebbly beach,
And on the joyous billows of the sea!
Yes, in the closet hear his voice, who spake
As never man did speak! Ask for his mind,
Whose patience bore the burdens of a world!
Ask trustingly; the promise is to thee:
Thou shalt receive! Then meet the child as one
For whom the Saviour died! That ransomed soul,—
God knows!—it may be given thee to lift
The little fledgeling to an angel's seat.
O touch not heedlessly the chords that thrill
To gladness or to woe! Lay gentle hands
On things that tell the tale in other worlds!
Go, speak to Jesus! Wait his answering word!
Then tell the trusting child like one who comes
Transfigured from the mount of prayer!

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS

ON THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

Lessons from the Psalms: A History Psalm.

Psalm 44. 1-8. July 1.

"Our fathers have told us what work thou didst in their days" (1).

Oh, who shall count a rescued nation's debt,
Or sum in words our martyrs' silent claims?
Who shall our heroes' dread exchange forget,—
All life, youth, hope, could promise to allure,
For all that soul could brave or flesh endure?
They shaped our future; we but carve their names.

"For they got not the land in possession by their own sword" (3). Signs are not wanting, says one, that the speculator, the army contractor, the concession hunter, like those ghouls who under cover of darkness visit a battlefield for plunder, are again preparing to profit by the misfortune of their fellow men. Therefore trust not the cunning statesman!

"Enemies," why fear them? If we are on the side of God we are sure to have them.

You have no enemies, you say?
Alas, my friend, the boast is poor!
He who has mingled in the fray
Of duty that the brave endure
Must have made foes. If you have none,
Small is the work that you have done.
You've hit no traitor on the hip,
You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,
You've never turned the wrong to right,
You've been a coward in the fight!

God "will save us" from our enemies!

* * * * *

There are some things that ancient and modern religious and secular history proves:

Human government is God's ordinance. He rules in history. He has the future under his control. In great crises he raises up men to meet them, just as he raised up John Knox for Scotland and Abraham Lincoln for America.

Paul's keynote for patriotism, what was that? "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God."

* * * * *

The following questions should be considered by every lover of his country:

Does it not seem to be a queer thing that over a hundred million people, dwelling together in a rich and broad land, with the power of government absolutely in their own hands, should tolerate so much wrong as exists in America? Why do we submit

to the injustices that oppress us? Why do we sanction instead of slay the perils that face us? Why do we follow, in such numbers, the leaders and the influences that will in the end involve us in ruin?

There's but one answer to them all.

Why are all these things so? They need not be so! They are so because the American people want them to be so, for the foundation principle of our government is that the people can have what they like. We are getting what we like. Why do we like it?

What Does Christian Brotherhood Mean?

1 John 3. 10-24. July 8.

It is reported that from the school histories of Japan all militaristic ideas have been cut out. Lessons are given to teach children to understand in a friendly way other nations of the world.

"Why do you hate that man?" Some one asked Charles Lamb; you do not even know him."

"Of course I do not know him," answered Lamb, "for if I knew him I should not hate him."

Who will be the first to start a League of Nations for no other purpose but to get acquainted with each other? When we see nothing but hatred in other nations it is pretty good evidence that we hate other nations. Our loves and hatreds are always a revelation of character.

* * * * *

What does Christian brotherhood mean? Listen!

Saint Francis of Assisi, so 'tis said,
Unto the "Lady Poverty" was wed
In mystic union, all in full accord
With vows of constancy unto his Lord.

He loved the little children of the poor,
Their toiling mothers proved his bounty sure,
He clothed the naked, saw the hungry fed,
Stinting himself that beggars might have bread,

Thus through the ages, whether near or far,
A saintly life shines like a golden star,
Drawing the world its sordidness above,
To ways of brotherhood and deeds of love.

* * * * *

At a club meeting of eminent authors some one proposed that they take a secret vote as to what was the most beautiful story in all literature. When the papers were opened it was found that a majority had voted for the story of Joseph, which by many is considered the greatest story of brotherhood in all literature. Brotherhood means compassion and love. Joseph had these prominent traits, as was evidenced by his treatment of his brothers.

The lack of these two brotherly traits between nations will lead at last to war, just as the lack of them in family life inevitably destroys the home. Brotherhood, like charity, begins at home, but still like charity, it loses its name if it ends there.

* * * * *

Indians reverenced the peace-pipe, which was borne through the wilderness by messengers of friendship. Whoever traveled with it was sacred. No warrior dared oppose him, and he was welcomed everywhere without fear.

Here is a suggestion for us, as to our treatment of those who seek to establish friendly relations between nations, having for their objective world peace. Let us at least respect peace-makers! Christ called them the children of God.

The Inner and the Outer.

2 Corinthians 4. 16-18; 1 Samuel 16. 6-13. July 15.

A fabled shepherd prayed for water, and the Ganges was turned into his grounds; but his cottage and flock were swept away by the inundation.

Over most of the desires of the outer man might be written, "Too much!"

Just as long as we let ourselves believe that the outer man is separate and distinct from the inner, so long are we living outside of God's plan for our lives. "I am the way, the truth, and the life"; or, as Dr. Harper interpreted it, "I am the way to live!"

* * * * *

An overwhelming consideration regarding the inner and the outer man is this: the former lives forever, the latter is just the scaffolding which death tears down. Trials, tribulations and light afflictions, what are they? The beams and nails in this scaffolding, upon which we stand to build the inner man. All major and minor virtues to be met in heaven were developed as men struggled in this life with an obdurate scaffold.

* * * * *

The inner man expresses itself through words and actions. Without many exceptions the rule holds true that what one praises in another is evidence of its possession by himself. Goodness sees goodness, badness discerns badness.

Watch closely as your friend describes an event, and you'll find he unconsciously reports his inner self, his ambitions, loves and hatreds. Not many are adepts at concealing the inner man. Christ said we are justified or condemned by our words.

* * * * *

Even if the law of the outer man (the body) is decay, we should provide every

means possible to protect it from decay. Listen to the voice of health!

I am the cheapest thing in the world.

I am the secret of happiness. Without me the years are but a menace, old age a tragedy.

I offer myself to you, and you do not heed.

I bide my time. Tomorrow you will come begging, but I shall turn aside. I cannot, I will not, be ignored.

I hold your future in the hollow of my hand.

I can make of you what I will. I am the door of opportunity, the open road to the fairyland of dreams.

I am the most important thing in the world, the one thing without which all else is impossible.

You ask me who I am, and I shall tell you:

I am good health!

What in Present-Day Social Life would Christ Approve? What Disapprove?

1 Corinthians 10. 23, 24, 31-33; 11. 1. July 22.

Ex-president Taft once said: "It is a common thing for unscrupulous counsel to lead jurors to vote as jurors for a verdict which, after the excitement of the trial is over, they are unable to support as men."

Adapting this statement to our subject, we may say it is a common thing for social custom to lead Christians as men and women to say and do things which afterward, in sober and saner moments, they find themselves unable to support as Christians, for they remember that the example of Jesus Christ ought to have kept them unspotted from social customs which they know Christ would not approve.

* * * * *

If you put a piece of lead into a pocket full of dimes and quarters, the lead has no intention of blackening its neighbors; but let them jingle together for a week and then take them out, and you will find the silver pieces all black.

The lead is yours; so also are the dimes and quarters. Time is yours, so also are the kinds and places of amusement. We are our brother's keeper. Would Christ approve of our doing those things and going to those places when we know our influence is hurting our brothers? And yet some do!

* * * * *

Since our bodies are God's temples, he surely would approve of our keeping them in health and beauty. How do you suppose he looks upon the "peacock style of adornment," or upon negligence in attire, or upon the lack of attire so prevalent in some circles?

A servant, trying to describe a lady caller, was unable to remember her name or tell how she was dressed. Finally she said:

"She's the pleasant one that always smiles when she speaks!"

Heart qualities always have more influence than dress qualities.

* * * * *

A native of Bombay is said to have a rare collection of idols gathered from nearly every country on the globe. The one from America is a gold dollar, and is labeled "The Christian's idol."

The prevalent greed for gold among all classes has reached the point where it may be called a moral disease among present-day social customs.

Christ sees the stubs of our checkbooks. They'll tell how far this disease has eaten into our lives. Will he write "Approved!" beneath them?

Industrial Missions at Home and Abroad.

2 Thessalonians 3. 6-13. July 29.

Why should stress be laid upon INDUSTRIAL missions? Because the gospel aims at making MEN, and has no place for idleness, which never elevated a race.

Because "industrial training lies at the root of many forms of human progress, efficiency and success, and missionary policy must more and more include large industrial plans as a part of the missionary undertaking."—K. L.

Because the missionary as a worker is "a revelation to all peoples. His example breaks down prejudice against work, and creates a new conscience."—R. A.

* * * * *

The African, who has been in the habit of thinking of all drudgery as work fit only for women, becomes interested enough in tools that are new to him, and makes some good use of his own strength. He comes to value ploughs that can, as he says, "do the work of ten wives."

From Africa comes the plea: "Send us more men qualified to teach the African how to work!"

* * * * *

William Carey, founder of modern missions, engaged in the manufacture of indigo, made the best type and paper in India, published a newspaper, laid out an experimental garden, and founded the "Agricultural and Horticultural Society in India."

We are told that when the queen of Madagascar ordered the missionaries out of the country, they pleaded that the usefulness and value of their services entitled them to remain. Challenged to make something useful, they made soap, and they stayed.—R. P. A.

The Eskimos of Labrador were saved

from extinction because the missionaries built up a large trade in seals and fish on a profit-sharing basis. In Alaska the missionaries helped to introduce the domesticated reindeer, which bring returns enough to enable the Eskimos to enjoy the decencies of civilization.

* * * * *

A French king said to a tutor he had engaged for his children:

"Make yourself useless, yes, make yourself useless as soon as you can!"

And this is what missionaries are doing, making themselves no longer needed by teaching men and women how to live by themselves.

This is evidenced by the self-supporting churches, schools and hospitals that they leave behind them.

A member of Parliament in India said: "American missionaries are doing more for the development of India through so-called industrial missions than the government itself."

* * * * *

A missionary among the Indians in Canada wrote:

"I am afraid you are slow at home to appreciate the immense importance of industrial work among uncivilized races in connection with missions. Humanly speaking, had we no sawmill you would never have heard of a transformed people at this out-of-the-way place."

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS

LEAVES FROM AN INTERPRETER'S NOTEBOOK.

Rev. John Gardner, D. D.

JULY, 1923.

Sunday, 1st. 2 Chronicles 16.

Hitherto Asa has done well. Now he exposes himself to censure on two grounds.

First, he is threatened by Baasha king of Israel, and he resorts to the expedient of paying tribute to Syria and inducing it to make an attack on Baasha which should relieve the pressure. Hanani, the seer, comes to tell Asa that in this he has committed a grave sin: he has trusted in big battalions instead of in the Lord. If he had sought Jehovah as his ally he should have mastered both Israel and Syria. For as a matter of fact, Syria was as dangerous to Judah as Israel. The prophets were continually warning Judah against the foolish practice of looking toward foreign soldiers for help. Force always challenges force. When a man starts about with a pistol other people get out the cartridges. If France makes an alliance with Russia, Prussia will ally itself with Austria, and sooner or later cannon will boom. Seek Jehovah and live! Put your trust in spiritual power! It will not fail.

Second, Asa was taken sick and consulted physicians, and for this again he was reproved. What was wrong? Apparently in some senses the prophets were physicians. They had a knowledge of herbs and minerals that were possessed of curative powers, and also they used the power of prayer. The physicians of the time were prone to use magic. Bennett says, "Reuss has suggested that the legitimate practice of medicine belonged to the schools of the prophets, but it seems quite as likely that in Judah, as in Egypt, any existing art of the knowledge of healing was to be found among the priests. Conversely, physicians who were neither priests nor prophets of Jehovah were almost certain to be ministers of idolatrous worship and magicians. They failed apparently to relieve their patient. Asa lingered in pain and weakness for two years, and then died. Possibly the sufferings of his latter days had protected his people from further oppression, and had at once appealed to their sympathy and removed any cause for resentment. When he died they only remembered his virtues and achievements, and buried him with royal magnificence, with sweet odors and divers kinds of spices; and they made a very great burning for him, probably of aromatic woods."

O God, teach us to be afraid of sinning against thee! Help us to avoid all resort to anger, vindictiveness, tyranny! Teach us to overcome evil with good! Make us very conscious of thy presence and guidance in life! Amen.

Monday, 2nd. 2 Chronicles 17.

There is something splendid about the manner in which Jehoshaphat set about his task. He comes to the throne a man of 35, and he shows himself one who has learned wisdom and who believes that the ways of the Lord are noble and right. He was a man of undivided allegiance. He did not tolerate any compromise with other gods. The word and the worship of Jehovah were to be the characteristics of his own life and the lives of his people. Hence Jeho-

vah was with him to bless him and to prosper him. The size of his army seems to us exaggerated. A tiny country like Judea could not feed so many people. But there is no doubt about the prosperity, glory and success which came to this man. The people of the desert became his tributaries, and surrounding nations learned to respect him.

Jehoshaphat did a great constructive work. He believed in education, and he set about the organization of teachers. He enlisted priests, Levites and laymen in the great task. There was not a village in his domain where the people were not provided with instruction. He did not believe that you can get right action where you have not imparted sound principles of action. If you want people to be honest you must teach them why they should be honest. Business men in America have been neglecting the church. Now they are waking up to the fact that each year more than a third of a billion dollars are stolen, and that the judges are practically unanimous in asserting that the majority of thieves are young, and that they seldom, if ever, have been to church or received sound religious instruction. The one hundred thousand ministers in America are the poorest paid men in the country, and yet they are the nation's most valuable economic asset. Jehoshaphat even trained his laymen to teach people the commandments of God.

A third thing in this chapter is that the men who were associated with Jehoshaphat in his program of defence were men who shared his ideals. They were not merely men of courage and of action, but they dedicated their powers unto the Lord. This, again, is what we need today. If all federal and staff executives were men who had dedicated their powers to God, this land would be Paradise restored.

Almighty God, give unto those who are in authority a sense of their responsibility to thee! May they learn that this land is thy land, this people thy people! Give them wisdom, courage, strength, that so they may be adequate to their tasks! Amen.

Tuesday, 3rd. 2 Chronicles 18.

From a political point of view it appeared a wise step for Jehoshaphat to seek a friendly alliance with Ahab, and it might lead to a reuniting of Israel and Judah if the marriage between Jehoram and Athaliah were consummated. As a matter of fact it threw the two kings together, and involved Jehoshaphat in Ahab's war with Syria. What seems politically expedient is not always wise. Ahab was a strong, courageous, resolute king, and his policies were not characterized by a sense of what God desired. He would determine his policies, and then seek for the divine indorsement. And he had surrounded himself with a school of prophets who could be trusted to say what the king wished them to say.

Jehoshaphat was willing to join in the campaign if he might be assured that Jehovah approved. Ahab could trust his prophets, and so called 400 of them, and they said "Yes" to what he wanted to do. Their unanimity invalidated their testimony. Jehoshaphat turned from them in scorn, and asked if there were not a real prophet in the land. This led to the calling of Micaiah, a man who feared not the face of king or crowd, but who would speak the word of God, neither more nor less. Imprisonment, punishment, death could not daunt this man. Elmslie says, "This narrative, apart from its instrinsic interests, is of great value for the welcome light it throws upon the prophets in Israel. The direct references of the later prophets have accustomed us to the thought that they had to contend with unworthy representatives of their calling. Here we are made to realize with peculiar vividness that even in the early stages of the national history the false prophet was a menace to Israel's spiritual enlightenment. Micaiah speaks few words, yet he deserves to rank with the great prophets. He resembles them at least in his overmastering conviction of the truth, and in his resolution to proclaim it, whatever cost of personal suffering it may entail. His opponents were professedly servants of Jehovah, and it is noteworthy that Micaiah does not accuse them of deliberate intent to deceive Ahab, but rather of self-deception and ignorance of the truth. Their ignorance of course was blameworthy, for it was due to their willingness to prophesy smooth things; they lacked that utter integrity of heart and entire devotion to his prophetic calling which Micaiah possessed."

The picture of Ahab on the field of battle stirs the pulse. He was a splendid warrior. Though wounded, he keeps his place. A lesser man would have fled. This man accepts his wounds as part of the price, and makes them honorable by his acts. If only he had kept himself loyal in heart to Jehovah, what a splendid record might have been his!

Our Father, give us grace to use our powers in obedience to thy will! Teach us how to restrain our ambitions, to discipline our spirits, so that we undertake only that which thou hast appointed! Help us to be faithful in our witness for thee! Amen.

Wednesday, 4th. 2 Chronicles 19.

Jehoshaphat escapes with his life, but now he must face the moral consequences of his alliance with those who were disloyal to Jehovah. Jehu the prophet was a very old man when he appeared before Jehoshaphat, and his years would add power to his rebuke. There is a moral authority attaching to those who have grown old in the service of God; their rebukes make us doubly ashamed. The sin that was rebuked was that of loving those who hated God. Do we know nothing of this sin? There are multitudes of church members who feel no hesi-

tation in treating as friends and intimates those who have turned their backs on God. It is our most perplexing problem today. We make it respectable to sin. Jehu warns the king that the divine wrath is kindled, and he must prepare for troublous times.

The rebuke does not attack the sincerity of Jehoshaphat's own religious life. Even in Israel he insisted on hearing the word of a true man of God, and he had fearlessly attacked the things in his own realm which inspired to a divided allegiance. Jehoshaphat gives further evidence of sincerity in that he at once sets about winning the wayward among his own people. He would have all men loyal to their Lord.

Elmslie has an interesting note on the judges. "In the earliest days justice was administered in Israel, as among the Bedouins of today, probably by all heads of families. In later days, when Israel was settled in Canaan, 'the elders of the city' and 'the elders of the priests' exercised the same function. The priests also at the great shrines, by their responses in matters brought for the decision of the divine oracle, exercised an important part in the development and administration of the law in Israel. In the monarchic period, the king acted as judge before whom difficult and important disputes seem to have been brought. In the present passage it is noteworthy that the king delegates this authority even in Jerusalem. Jehoshaphat's measures as here described were twofold, (1) to establish judges throughout the cities of Judah, (2) to establish a kind of court of appeal in Jerusalem itself."

Jehoshaphat recognizes that there is something more necessary than a knowledge and a fine discernment, and that is integrity of soul. He must look on his office as a divine trust. He is dealing with the interest of the people of God, and he must beware of injuring one who is precious to Jehovah.

Our God and Father, give us courage to come out from the ungodly, and to be separate! Help us to control our homes so that they may be centers of piety! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Thursday, 5th. 2 Chronicles 20.

The wrath of God, of which the prophet had spoken, now visits Jehoshaphat. A good man is tested by the manner in which he meets adversity, and especially the trouble which he knows to be a consequence of his past indiscretion. Jehoshaphat meets his trouble religiously. He is a strong calm spirit recognizing the hand of the Lord, and believing that the solution of his problem lies in getting right with God. He calls the people together for fasting and prayer. He stands with his back to the priest's court, and facing the people who are assembled in the outer court, offers a most remarkable prayer on behalf of the nation, men, women and children, and on his own behalf. He builds upon the almightiness of God. One who is all-powerful can help in the direst difficulty. The land belonged to Jehovah, and had been given to this people. They were there by his election and appointment. The Temple was a monument unto God, a symbol of his presence, a place where his people might resort in times of distress. The motive prompting those who were now invading the land was contempt for Jehovah and ingratitude to those who aforetime had shown kindness.

It is a remarkable sight. Bennett says, "Meanwhile the great assemblage stood in the attitude of supplication before Jehovah, not a gathering of mighty men praying for blessing upon their strength and courage, but a mixed multitude, men and women, children and infants, seeking sanctuary, as it were, at the Temple, and casting themselves in their extremity upon the protecting care of Jehovah. The answer came, not by fire from heaven nor by any visible sign, not by voice of thunder accompanied by angelic trumpets, nor by angel nor archangel, but by a familiar voice, hitherto unsuspected of any supernatural gifts, by a prophetic utterance whose only credentials were given by the influence of the Spirit upon the speaker and his audience. The chronicler relates with evident satisfaction how, in the midst of that great congregation, the Spirit of Jehovah came, not upon king, nor priest, nor acknowledged prophet, but upon a subordinate minister of the Temple, a Levite and a member of the Temple choir like himself. Jahaziel's message showed that Jehoshaphat's prayer had been accepted; Jehovah responded without reserve to the confidence reposed in him. He would vindicate his own authority by delivering Judah. Jehoshaphat should have blessed proof of the immense superiority of simple trust in Jehovah over an alliance with Ahab or the king of Damascus."

Our Father, we thank thee for the power of faith, the faith that can remove mountains! Teach us how to believe! Give us as great confidence in thy willingness as in thy ability to help! Grant that we may restrain our passions and trust to the power of the spirit of Christ! May we believe that he always wins who sides with God! Amen.

Friday, 6th. 2 Chronicles 21.

This chapter makes pitiful reading. Jehoshaphat had labored hard and long to lead his people into paths of reverence, justice and honor. He had unified his people, he had developed a great scheme for the direction of religious and secular life. In a few brief years everything was undone. And the cause of the disaster was a mistake in marriage. Jehoshaphat had imagined that it would be a wise and clever thing to unite in marriage his son and heir with the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

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That meant the introduction of mixed worship. Ahab worshiped Jehovah, but he also tolerated the worship of strange gods. Under the influence of a woman with the ideas of Athaliah and his own perverse disposition Jehoram set about a policy of wickedness which covers his memory with shame.

His first act was one of fratricide. Former kings had got rid of possible rivals from earlier dynasties, but Jehoram got rid of his own kith and kin. His second act was a commitment to a divided allegiance: he bent his knees to Baal. His wife's god shared the homage he ought to have offered to Jehovah alone. His third act was to compel his people to accept his standards of religion, and therefore to degrade the worship of the Holy One of Israel. He was prepared to use force to make people conform.

Such apostate wickedness could have but one ending. If Jehovah were real he could not endure such outrageous folly. He showed his displeasure in suffering Judah to be invaded, and also in moving the hearts of some of the people to rebel against so unworthy a man. To contrast the Judah of Jehoshaphat with that of Jehoram makes the heart ache. One evil man can cause unutterable mischief.

Jehoram's last days are described as filled with misery. Disaster came to his kingdom, misery and disease came upon himself. When he died his people were ashamed of him, and did not give him the public burial which they had given to his fathers. Could anything be more sad than to die under the displeasure of God and the disapprobation of one's fellows? How terribly a man must have failed, from whom all men turned in disgust! To live in such a fashion as to have many people uncover their heads as a tribute of respect and love is an ambition which all should cultivate.

O God, help us in the everyday affairs of life to show our loyalty to thee! May our friendships be with those who honor thee! Grant that our influence may be for good! When directing the behavior of others, may we seek always the highest and best! Amen.

Saturday, 7th. 2 Chronicles 22.

We are still witnessing the trail of the evil alliance in marriage which was based on a compromise in matters of ideals and reverence and spiritual loyalty. All history has the shadows of such disasters. Marriage is a holy thing. To found it on fortune, political or social advantage, is to court disaster.

Just what had led to the slaying of the royal princes we do not know, but the people of Jerusalem took the matter of choosing a king into their own hands, and elected Ahaziah. The Septuagint gives the age of Ahaziah as twenty years, but the narrative in Kings gives it as twenty-two, and this is more probable than forty-two.

The young man was dominated by his mother. She was a clever, determined woman, utterly impatient at what she conceived as the narrow, prejudiced, ignorant ways of Judah. She tried to cement the ties between Judah and Israel. Through her mother she was under the influence of the broader culture of Phœnicia. We should always remind ourselves that culture is not religion. A love for beautiful forms, for beautiful sounds, is not synonymous with a love for the beauty of holiness.

In the early days of his reign Ahaziah went down to Samaria to visit his cousin Jehoram, who had been wounded in battle against the Syrians. It happened at that time Jehu was leading a rebellion against the house of Omri, and Ahaziah was led to go out with his cousin against the rebels. Jehu was victorious, and he carried out a policy of extermination with ruthless barbarity. The little lads who were royal princes were captured and slain, and thus the kinsmen of Ahaziah were destroyed as well as Ahaziah himself.

The terrible news roused Athaliah to action, and she seized the reins of government in Jerusalem. All members of the royal line who might be possible rivals were ordered destroyed. Apparently even the princesses were killed, all save Jehoshabeath the wife of the high priest, and this clever and brave woman managed to rescue and hide in the Temple the baby child of Ahaziah. The next six years witnessed the gathering of forces, moral rather than political, which were destined to check the evil associated with the coming of Athaliah and to lead the way to a new discovery as to the divine commandments.

Our Lord and Father, dwell in the homes of our land! Grant unto husbands and wives a deeper respect for each other! Help them to unite in thy service! Grant to all parents a true love for their children, and a desire to bring them up in thy nurture and fear! Help the young to honor their fathers and mothers, and as they choose those to whom they may be united, teach them to choose wisely and according to thy word! Amen.

Sunday, 8th. 2 Chronicles 23.

Jehoiada feels that the hour has struck when he must match himself against Athaliah. He entered into a sacred agreement or alliance with the royal guards to organize an insurrection. At a time when the guards were being changed, the queen was to be made prisoner in her palace, and at the same time the youthful Joash was to be declared king.

As to the meaning of verse 11 Elmslie says: "It is supposed that by 'the testimony' some document inscribed with laws, a charter binding king and people to live according to its precepts, is meant, and that this document was placed in the hands or on the head of Joash along with the crown. The wearing of an inscription or a document on a solemn occasion, though strange to Western thought, is not alien to Eastern methods."

The position assumed by Jehoiada was virtually that of a dictator. It seems as though two motives dominated him. First, he was determined to resist any further encroachment on the worship of Jehovah. The influence of Athaliah was fatal to religious loyalty. Second, he was patriotically devoted to the kingdom of Judah. He was afraid of the loss of national indentity. Therefore he resolved on getting rid of Athaliah, and began that superintendence of the life of Joash which went the length of choosing his wives for him.

It is strange how easily a strong man may overreach himself. There are few regents in history who have been able to remember that they were not kings, but must so act as to be able to give account of themselves when their kings came to the point of exercising sovereign power for themselves.

O God, teach us to recognize thy authority! Thou art our God, and thy laws are absolute over our lives. Thou art the God and Father of all with whom we come in contact. Teach us to respect those whom thou dost love! May we use the powers with which we are endowed to thy honor and glory! May we serve thee wholeheartedly and gladly! Amen.

Monday, 9th. 2 Chronicles 24.

There was sharp controversy between the king and the priests. The Temple was in need of repair. Money had been raised amply for the purpose yet nothing was done. Jehoiada was acting as though he were equal to the king. He had to be taught that Joash was no longer a child but a man, and a man who intended to see that such abuses were ended. The chronicler tries to soften the story of priestly failure, but we know from Kings that something was seriously wrong.

The abuse of a trust is always blameworthy, but when it attaches to the cause of God it becomes doubly culpable. Yet how often do we find church affairs carelessly handled! There are men in our churches who are famous for their capacity to handle big business. Their affairs are run with care, promptitude, dignity and efficiency. But when it comes to church affairs they behave with contempt. Surely if a man has brains, business aptitude, executive ability, he ought to give his best powers to the church!

When king and high priest put their heads together, they arranged to gather Temple funds in a manner that gave dignity to the whole proceeding, and yet did not mar the hour of public worship. Cannot business men do something to remove the necessity for notices and collections being sandwiched between intercession and preaching? Our forefathers never dreamed of the kind of thing we tolerate. The offertory was taken as people entered the house of God: each man gave his required amount, and then gave a thank offering. Thus the cause was maintained efficiently, and yet money and secularities were not intruded on praise, prayer and instruction.

Jehoiada did a great work, and when he died he was deemed worthy to be buried among kings. After his death the people began to compromise once more. How prone we are to give less than our best and highest to God! Prophets and priests pleaded in vain. At last Zechariah the son of Jehoiada pleaded and warned, but Joash gave the people leave, and they martyred him.

A crime so cruel and wicked could not go unpunished. Jehovah was against him. His country was invaded, disease began to gnaw his vitals, friends of the high priest intrigued against him, and assassinated him. Bennett says, "Like Nero when he shook off the control of Seneca, Joash changed his policy as soon as Jehoiada was dead. Apparently he was a weak character, always following some one's leading. The change of policy was adopted at the suggestion of the princes of Judah. King, princes and people fell back into the old wickedness: they forsook the Temple and served idols."

We all know the danger of allowing other people to do our thinking for us. A man without settled convictions is a danger to himself and his fellows. This is the secret of Joash's fall. He forfeited respect. He under-estimated the powers that were on the other side, for the strong men of a community are on the side of goodness, and when they combine the weakling must go.

Almighty God, help us to respect those whom thou dost send to warn, to exhort, to teach! May we hear and obey the voice of the preacher! Save us from despising those who tell us things which interfere with our policies! Help us to inquire whether we are pleasing thee! Restrain us from going astray and leading others astray! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Tuesday, 10th. 2 Chronicles 25.

There are aspects of the story of Amaziah which arouse keen interest. Like most of us, there was a "But" in his life which created his problem and made every

step hazardous. He was not simply a man who had a weakness: his danger was far more subtle. First, however, we should notice his strength and courage. He had insight into the problem of kingship. He asked what was the secret of the success and failure of others, and he determined to make the venture of living by a simple rule, of maintaining a single loyalty. Therefore in the hour of peril he listened to the prophet, avoided entangling alliances, got rid of the hired mercenaries who were brave and capable soldiers but did not share the religious ideals of Judah, and faced the hazards of the campaign with spiritual rather than material and physical resources. His faith was crowned with success. There was no doubt about his victory.

In the hour of triumph the lurking dangers of his life began to reveal themselves. Few men are equal to the temptation of great success. He became careless. Jehovah had delivered him but in the days of triumph he began to pay homage to other gods that had rendered no help, gods that had failed the people who professed allegiance to them. It was an amazing fall. Jehovah had saved, and the rescued man turned to the gods of the very people from whom he had been delivered.

Amaziah now courts disaster. His kingdom was small compared with Israel. He had been warned against entangling himself with Israel. Heedless of the warning, he addresses Joash king of Israel with an invitation either to fight or to talk over Amaziah's claims as an equal. Joash replies scornfully, "Why are you talking to yourself about your greatness, making claims beyond your power to enforce?" Amaziah persisted in his folly, and the result was that Joash met him face to face, but in such fashion that ruin and death came to him, and sorrow and disaster to his people.

Clarkson says: "Presumption is sure to result in adversity of more kinds than one. It ends in the bitter mortification of defeat, of conscious overthrow and dishonor. It usually ends (as here) in loss, either of property, of reputation, or of friendship, perhaps of all these at the same time. It frequently brings down upon a man the severe reproaches of those who have been injured along with the principal offender."

O God, keep us back from presumptuous sins! Let them not have dominion over us! Help us to walk humbly with thee! Teach us to rely upon thy strength, to obey thee, and to find thy mercy all sufficient! Amen.

Wednesday, 11th. 2 Chronicles 26.

Uzziah or Azariah was born just before his father made the initial mistake of his career, in allowing his heart to become vagrant and in sending a vain-glorious challenge to Joash king of Israel.

He was chosen king when but sixteen years of age. Apparently he had been ruling for some time while his father lay a prisoner at Lachish. His rebuilding of Eloth may imply two things: Edom may have rebelled and Uzziah's first act have been the putting down of the rebellion, or he may have had ambitions to develop the commerce of his people. He reigned for fifty-two years, and seems to have been fairly prosperous. Apparently his character had the strength and weakness of his father. His early days were spent under the dominance of the priestly party, and especially of Zechariah, a man of profound knowledge of holy things, of high character and experience, and a capable teacher. Under the influence of this godly man Uzziah sought the Lord, and preserved public worship, and lived in favor with God and man.

The long reign of Uzziah was attended by many notable achievements. He was in some respects a military genius. His campaigns were successful. He built fortifications which were remarkably strong. He invented weapons which were regarded as a distinct advance, and may be considered among the first adventures in artillery. Uzziah had a keen interest in agriculture and horticulture. He did a great deal for the improvement of the soil and the methods of its culture. He became the most powerful of all the kings of Judah.

When approaching three score years and ten Uzziah was stricken with leprosy. It was the belief of the Jews that disease was a punishment for sin. The book of Kings does not tell us what sin Uzziah had committed, but Chronicles says he dared to enter the Temple and burn incense. Bennett says, "In so doing he was violating the law, which made the priestly office and all priestly functions the exclusive prerogative of the house of Aaron, and denounced the penalty of death against anyone who usurped priestly functions. Uzziah was not allowed to carry out his unholy design. The high priest Azariah went in after him with eighty stalwart colleagues, rebuked his presumption, and bade him leave the sanctuary."

Uzziah was very angry at being thus thwarted. While in a paroxysm of wrath leprosy broke out, and he knew himself as branded of Jehovah. All his glory vanished, he was now a branded and banished man.

Almighty God, forgive us our obstinacy and our disobedience! Teach us to fear thy name! In all things may we seek to do thy holy will! Help us also to accept rebuke! May we learn to restrain our tempers! If in anything we have offended thee, grant us forgiveness! Amen.

Thursday, 12th. 2 Chronicles 27.

Jotham learned the lesson of his father's experience, and did not presume to break down the defences of holiness which had been established in the house of God. Once and for all the lesson had been brought home that even kings must recognize the higher laws of life. We may say of certain practices or certain ideas that they are trivial, yet the disposition to criticize and to break them down may not be trivial. There are many practices, such as closing the eyes and bending the knees in prayer, which may appear to be very trivial, yet to despise them is not trivial. Offering incense is a trivial thing, but the motive that leads a king to think that any man in any way or any temple may do a thing like that is not trivial at all.

There is nothing recorded to detract from the reputation of Jotham. He lived and died in prosperity. He succeeded in his campaigns, and added to the territory and security of Judah. He gave deference to the priesthood, and gave of his resources to the beautifying and improvement of the Temple. The most pregnant sentence describing Jotham is that in verse 6, "he prepared (or made firm) his ways before Jehovah." Piety is the secret of power. "Power of the truest and highest kind is not the endowment of a moment, it is not a suddenly acquired possession: it is a growth, an accumulation; it is the long result of faithful service."

Our Father, we thank thee for our homes, our parents, those who loved thee and who set us an example of reverence and fidelity! We thank thee that notwithstanding their limitations and weaknesses their hearts were set on pleasing thee! Their prayers, their counsels have been our support. Help us to follow them as they followed thee! Amen.

Friday, 13th. 2 Chronicles 28.

There are degrees in vice as there are in virtue. Some men are described as wrong and wicked, others are described as not good: their lives are negative, they are not the allies of truth. Without being positively wicked their wickednesses and failures really throw them into the party of wickedness. Ahaz was a man of this type. We can say that he had an excuse for his weakness in loyalty and devotion in the unmistakable tokens of imminent peril and disaster, but the things he did were without excuse, and really precipitated the disaster he sought to avert. He encouraged all manner of idolatrous and evil practices.

The war clouds burst over Judah, and much havoc was wrought. Captives were taken, and their fate might have been very sad had it not been for the intervention of Oded the prophet. Elmslie says of this story and its effect, "It is the product of a religious and moral connection worthy of high admiration. We have, in fact, in these verses a most clear instance of that inculcation of great religious principles which was the primary object of the writer of Chronicles. The deep ethical and spiritual value of this example of how to treat the fallen foe hardly requires comment. Israel must forgive if it would be forgiven; the captives are not 'the enemy,' but 'your brothers'; and when conscience is at last awakened, how great is the revulsion, and how nobly do the generous qualities of human nature appear, when the captives, laden not with the chains of bondage, but with clothing and food, are restored to their homes in peace!"

Ahaz is a type of the double-minded. Not having rooted himself in the presence and power of Jehovah, he does not know what to do in days of trouble. Experience does not teach him. Inhibition does not drive him back upon God. The impulse to nobler courses which changes the policy of Israel brings no suggestion to him. He seeks alliance with Assyria, and when he is betrayed, and finds that his ally is a tyrannous and unscrupulous master, he is utterly confused. He believes that the power of Assyria is due to its god, and he turns from Jehovah to seek refuge and strength elsewhere. He abandoned every sacred thing, he shut up the house of Jehovah, he made altars to strange gods at every street corner.

Poor confused Ahaz! Thy story is pitiful! Thou hast done a foolish thing, and art not worthy to be buried among kings!

Almighty God, help us to live! We know not how to order our steps, and therefore we turn to thee for guidance. Teach us to serve thee with singleness of purpose! May our allegiance to thee be constant! Amen.

Saturday, 14th. 2 Chronicles 29.

Hezekiah's first act was really a condemnation and repudiation of his father's apostasy. A young man of fine spirit must have felt acutely the necessity for such action. Ahaz had tried to get along without the Temple and without Jehovah, and he had brought trouble on Israel. Hezekiah begins by opening the doors of the house of God, and removing every symbol of a lesser worship and a divided allegiance. He then commands the Levites to sanctify themselves, and also the place of worship. Hezekiah would get right with God for his own sake and for the sake of his people.

The work of sanctification was willingly undertaken, and yet it was not deemed a light or easy thing to perform. It must be built upon the words of the Lord, that is,

either the word which had been spoken in the Law or the word that was being spoken by the prophets. It was a searching word. It demanded that every recess, every vessel, every portion of the Temple, must be deliberately set apart for Jehovah. Many days must pass, for the work of consecration cannot be hurried.

We shall do well to heed this matter of time in consecration. Our experience of God lacks depth. We are so hurried, we no sooner feel the impulse to mend our ways, the challenge to a higher life, than we begin to pray and in a few minutes start out on what we think is a new career. In a little while we are back in our divided and uncertain ways of living, giving God but a half allegiance. Take time to be holy! Take time to examine and sanctify every recess of your mind and heart, and to present it unto God for his service!

When the work of cleansing and consecration was complete, king, ministers of religion, officers of state, and congregation came to make common atonement for their common sins. There was sacrifice by burnt offering, which "served to express worship in general, and to atone, give a covering, for general sinfulness." There was a sin offering of seven victims to cover every sin of every involved person, and all were involved. The particular sins involved in the sacrifice were neglect of the house of God and failure to worship him. Then the music of worship was heard, the holy psalms expressing joyful and worshipful praise. After the hour of contrition and consecration the sacrifices of peace and joy were offered, and the people found themselves swept forward into a royal festival.

Nothing will bring the spirit of laughter like a sense of reconciliation to God. Let your conscience be at peace, establish yourself in loyalty to your Lord, and your heart will be filled with gladness and your mouth with laughter!

O Lord our God, we thank thee for thy peace! We rejoice in thy power to make all things new. In finding thee we find the spring of a great delight. Help us to drink of the waters of life this day! May we strive to please thee in all things! Amen.

Sunday, 15th. 2 Chronicles 30.

Hezekiah's action as recorded in this chapter is equally remarkable. For a long period of time, with only the briefest interruptions, there had been no dealings between Israel and Judah save those of open hostility. Now sorrow has come upon Israel, and most of the people have gone into captivity: only a remnant are left. To this remnant Hezekiah sends overtures of peace. His heart is set on pleasing Jehovah. He feels that if only he can get all the children of the covenant to come together for the Passover he may be bringing in a new day. So he sends runners to every part with a royal invitation. Some accept it though the majority laughed with scorn, and mocked those who brought the invitation. "The pious enthusiasm of Judah stood out in vivid contrast to the stubborn impenitence of the majority of the ten tribes."

There were difficulties such as arise among modern religious people. First, Hezekiah had put the Passover a month later than usual, and though this was not illegal, it was irregular. Some thought the king was in danger of taking upon himself some of the prerogatives of the priesthood, and jealousies were aroused. Then there were difficulties arising from the fact that for sixteen years the services were in abeyance, and the priests and Levites were unfamiliar with routine. Then there were such crowds of people that there was not sufficient organization to cope with them: some actually broke the ceremonial ritual. We know the confusion that may arise from these varying circumstances. The significance of this occasion was such that men forgot their jealousies and irritations. Hezekiah had a spirit in him which none could resist. He said finally, when told of the men of Ephraim who had broken the ritualistic law, "The good Lord pardon every one that settleth his heart to seek God!" and men felt that the Lord could be trusted to judge people by their motives, and not by their ignorance. So the feast went forward, and at its conclusion the priests and Levites arose and blessed the people, and all went to their homes feeling that prayer was answered and Jehovah reigned over all.

Our Father, we rejoice that thou judgest the heart, and however imperfect our service, if rendered with a single eye to thy glory it is accepted by thee! Teach us how to appreciate our neighbors, teach us to work with them even if their ways are different from our own! Amen.

Monday, 16th. 2 Chronicles 31.

This chapter tells us of Hezekiah the reformer. He had done a notable work in Jerusalem: now he turns his attention to the kingdom at large. He inaugurated a root and branch policy. Wherever there was a symbol of idolatry, anything suggesting disloyalty to Jehovah, anything calculated to perpetuate heathenish and superstitious practices, the king had it rooted out and destroyed.

Meanwhile Hezekiah turned his attention to the provision of a regular ministry, and to its adequate maintenance. He set an example in liberality. No other worshiper was more generous in maintaining the servants of God, none showed greater solicitude for their welfare. Such an example was bound to impress others, and the result was that the officers of the Tem-

ple were overwhelmed by the abundance of the tokens of good will and affection.

Probably no problem of today is more important than the proper equipment and maintenance of the ministry. A pastor should have the respect of his people. No man worthy of the name will ever seek for emoluments in connection with his office. On the other hand, a true pastor is deserving of honor and respect. Men who think nothing of paying an actor or a singer or public entertainer large rewards, will give their minister niggardly doles. A minister should be paid for his services so that he has not to accept fees and gratuities. He should be honored as the friend and equal of his parishioners. His character, education and standing entitle him to recognition as the equal of all.

Respect for the ministry will bring men into the ministry, for there is no calling more attractive than that of trying to conserve for the individual and the nation the highest, holiest and most helpful things.

Almighty God, we invoke thy blessing on all those at home and abroad who have heard thy call, and gone forth as ministers of the word of life! Strengthen their hearts, we beseech thee! Grant that they may be true shepherds, ready to lay down their lives for their flocks! Raise up more workers, we beseech thee! Amen.

Tuesday, 17th. 2 Chronicles 32.

Elmslie says: "The chronicler introduces us somewhat abruptly to the Assyrian crisis. From 2 Kings we learn that Hezekiah renounced the sovereignty of Assyria, which his father Ahaz had acknowledged. Thereupon Sennacherib invaded Judah, and Hezekiah was obliged to acknowledge with a heavy payment of tribute his dependence on the Assyrian king. Sennacherib, having discovered the weakness of Judah, next demanded an unconditional surrender, intending to transport the Jews to another country. This demand Hezekiah resisted, being strengthened thereto by Isaiah. The chronicler does not refer to the earlier invasion or to the tribute, such a humiliation of the pious and devoted king being in his belief unthinkable. That any invasion should have taken place was sufficiently astonishing, until the issue showed that the anxiety and distress were for the greater glory of Israel's God, and for the further proof of Hezekiah's trust in him."

Hezekiah's resistance to Sennacherib makes one of the most moving stories of heroism. The way in which he stopped the water springs and thus protected the life of his people while Sennacherib's hosts were exposed to all the perils of drought, shows the energy and resourcefulness with which the peril was met. The erection of defences was carried forward in a similar spirit. The next step was the organization of a citizen's army. Finally, Hezekiah taught the people that their great ally could be depended upon, and Jehovah would save.

Piety does not encourage a man to presumptuous folly. We must use our brains, our ingenuity, our resources. On the other hand, piety is more important than all our other resources. "Trust in God and keep your powder dry" contains a whole philosophy of life.

The heathen boastings of the Assyrians were met by the prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah. And their prayers were heard. A dreadful epidemic, possibly bubonic plague, broke out among the Assyrians, and there was nothing to do but break camp and flee. The enemy fled, but the plague remained, and even Hezekiah himself was stricken and nigh unto death. His life was spared for a season, so that he became a wonder unto many. When death came it took from Judah one who had lived an honorable, splendid life.

What was the most important achievement of this great and good man? Bennett suggests that one of the most important was the development of the religious value of music. It may be that he is right.

O God, we thank thee for the gift of song! We thank thee for the music of heaven, some of whose glory has already been interpreted to us. We pray that our souls may learn to praise thee more perfectly as the years pass. Amen.

Wednesday, 18th. 2 Chronicles 33.

The tragedy of kings is the problem of history. How is it that those who are exalted to the highest power so frequently fail in their exercise of power? Hezekiah was so strong, so true, so wholehearted, and the influence of men like Isaiah and Micah was so profound, that we should expect a man like Manasseh to continue in ways of piety. Instead of this he reverts to all the dangerous and degrading follies of those from whose influence his father had tried to rescue his people. The prophets declared the word of God, but it was all in vain: the foolish man would heed nothing. As a consequence, when the Assyrians had recovered from their sickness and were ready to renew their campaign of conquest they came back and took Manasseh prisoner. Ruin and humiliation did what words of wisdom could not do. The unhappy man wept before God and repented, and he found—what we all rejoice in knowing as a glorious truth,—that a broken and contrite heart God will not despise. A little later he was allowed to return to Jerusalem as a vassal of Asshur-bani-pal.

On his return he set about a reformation. He rebuilt the defences of the land, he purified the Temple and its worship, he abolished idolatry and the other extravagances of his unregenerate days, he became

known as a man of prayer. A big sinner became a big saint. And he was honored with long life, the record of which is in the Book of the Seers, a book now unknown to us.

Bennett says: "When his prayer had been heard, and his exile was at an end, then Manasseh knew and acknowledged that Jehovah was God. Men first begin to know God when they have been forgiven. The alienated and disobedient, if they think of him at all, merely have glimpses of his vengeance, and try to persuade themselves that he is a stern tyrant. By the penitent not yet assured of the possibility of reconciliation God is chiefly thought of as a righteous judge. The knowledge of God's love dawns upon the soul in the blessed experience of forgiveness; and because love and forgiveness are more strange and unearthly than rebuke and chastisement, the sinner is humbled much more by pardon than by punishment; and his trembling submission to the righteous judge deepens into profound reverence and awe for the God who can forgive, who is superior to all vindictiveness, whose infinite resources enable him to blot out the guilt, to cancel the penalty, and annul the consequences of sin."

Our Father, we thank thee for the mightiness of thy redemption! Help us to repent of our sins! Give us the heart of little children! Help us to love thee with all our hearts! Teach us to hate our vices and to cultivate virtue! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Thursday, 19th. 2 Chronicles 34.

Josiah was a king whose story filled the chronicler with joy. From his youth up he walked with a right purpose. While yet a boy he gave himself to God, and sought to purge his land from every vestige of the leaven of idolatry and divided allegiance to Jehovah. When a young man there fell into his hands a document known as the Book of the Law, and from that day he became a great reformer.

His purging of the land was with violence. We recoil from the intensity of those intolerant souls who in the name of God adopt a ruthless policy toward everything and every one who acts contrary to what they believe to be essential to pure religion, yet we must be careful lest in our recoil from this spirit we condone what is positively wrong and dangerous. We should act in love and in a tolerant spirit, and yet we ought not to compromise. Like Paul we may rejoice if anyhow Christ is preached, and yet like him we ought to recognize that there are times when even Peter must be resisted to his face.

What was the Book of the Law which was found? It is quite possible that the chronicler thinks of the Pentateuch, but it seems likely that what was actually found was either Deuteronomy as we have it, or the original edition of Deuteronomy. Shaphan the king's secretary read from the book. Some portions of it, like Deuteronomy 28, made terrible reading, and profoundly moved the ardent king. He became alarmed at possible peril at the hands of Jehovah, and so sent to inquire of Huldah, the wife of one of the courtiers, who was known as a prophetess. She declared that the city was doomed, but that Josiah himself should be spared. The effect of the prophecy was to lead the king, the elders and the people to a new covenant with Jehovah.

O God, teach us to live unto thee! May the testimony of those who have gone before guide and restrain us! May we seek to be clothed with holiness! May we give ourselves wholeheartedly to thy service! Amen.

Friday, 20th. 2 Chronicles 35.

One of the outstanding events of Josiah's reign was the holding of a great Passover Feast such as Israel had not known for centuries. The ark seems to have been moved from its resting place in the Temple. Josiah ordered it back to its accustomed place. He then made provision on the most lavish scale for the offering of sacrifices. Josiah gave three times as much as Hezekiah had done. His magnificence influenced the nobles, who also gave generously. The heads of the priesthood and the chiefs of the Levites also offered lavishly. Every family of Judea was ministered to by the Levites. Every one had an honorable place either in helping or in being helped.

What was peculiar about this Passover? Elmslie says, "Actually the novelty of Josiah's festival was (1) that it was kept in Jerusalem, whereas previously the Passover had been a household feast observed at any high place throughout the country, and (2) that it thus marked the inauguration of the system of only one legitimate sanctuary, Jerusalem."

Josiah's death was evidently a great shock to the chronicler. He could not understand it. His whole conception of God's methods of governing the world was outraged by it. We all know the danger of the "false limits of our minds." We must beware lest we presume to be angry with Jehovah because his ways and his thoughts are not as our thoughts.

O God, thou art too wise to err, too good to be unkind! Help us to leave the future in thy almighty, all-loving hands! Thou wilt lead us to glory. Keep us from foolish decisions! May we learn to beware of policies and practices which may place us in hazardous circumstances! Guide and guard us continually, we pray in Christ's name! Amen.

Saturday, 21st. 2 Chronicles 36.

The kings of Judah have now become entangled in the great struggle between Pharaoh-Necho and Nebuchadnezzar. Bennett says, "The chronicler had no motive for lingering over the last sad days of the monarchy: the rest of his narrative is almost entirely abridged from the Book of Kings. Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah pass over the scene in rapid and melancholy succession. In the case of Jehoahaz, who only reigned three months, the chronicler omits the unfavorable judgment recorded in the Book of Kings, but he repeats it for the other three, even for the poor lad of eight (Jehoiachin) who was carried away captive after a reign of three months and ten days. The chronicler had not learned that kings can do no wrong; on the other hand, the ungodly policy of Jehoiachin's ministers is labelled with the name of the boy sovereign."

How should this man end his story? How could he end it in gloom, in the horrible tragedy of ruin, destruction and exile? He could not do it, for he knew that later the Temple was restored, and a new day dawned, and so he bridges the gap. Fortunately knowledge had come to justify faith. The years had brought tribulation, but there was a sequel to the story, and he wants us to know that he is acquainted with the sequel. The details can be left to other hands and pens.

A true servant of God believes in the sequel, and no one who bears the message of Jehovah has any warrant to speak without the forward look. There is always the last word to be spoken, and thank God that word is, "Behold, I make all things new!"

Dear Lord, we praise thee that one day thou shalt see of the travail of thy soul and be satisfied! Help us to believe in the glory of thy coming! One day we shall see all things put under thy feet. One day thou shalt be the light of all our seeing. Give us patience, courage, hope, that we may wait for thee! Amen.

EZRA.

Sunday, 22nd.

In the Hebrew Bible Ezra and Nehemiah are one book. For hundreds of years no one ever thought of dividing them. They cover a most important period in history. The edict of Cyrus must be dated 538 B. C.; the close of the historical incidents described is about 432 B. C. In addition, there are references to high priests down to Jaddua, and this carries us down to 320 B. C., if not later. The contents of the books reveal that portions are in the third person, other portions relating to Ezra are in the first person, while still other portions relating to Nehemiah are also in the first person. Then there are various lists of names, etc., which indicate that other documents have been consulted. We see, therefore, that the title of the books has the same sort of significance as the title "Samuel." The books as we have them may have been written about the beginning of the third century B. C., but they were based on other records and documents of such value that their historicity is admitted by practically all great modern scholars.

Who was the author? Ryle and Batten, two great moderns, aver that it must have been the same man or group of men who compiled Chronicles, and that though the books precede Chronicles in the Hebrew Bible they were really intended to follow, as indeed they do in our English Bibles. On the other hand, a great British scholar, Witton Davies, says that there is not an atom of evidence in ancient codices, versions, or editions in support of the opinion. He says, "The resemblances between Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah in words, phraseology, and point of view are held to prove that one man, or at least men of one school, edited, coördinated and assimilated all these books. But the fact that the differences are more striking than the resemblances makes this supposition quite untenable."

Read through the whole book of Ezra today.

O God, give us sincere and loyal hearts! Help us to serve thee only! May our allegiance to thee be true! Amen.

Monday, 23rd.

The story contained in these records is of great importance. It shows us the part played by a great Aryan in the recovery of Judaism. It tells of the spirit of true religion, which neither distance nor the distractions of wealth and business could kill. Only a few Jews had courage enough to go back to Jerusalem, but they did a great work. They practically gave us our Bible, for they gathered together and conserved many of its portions. They consolidated the Jewish remnants as a separate people. They exalted religion above politics. They developed the teaching and preaching function: for the first time a pulpit appears.

Adeney says: "Evidently we have here come to the watershed of Jewish history. Up to this point all the better teachers of Israel had been toiling painfully in their almost hopeless efforts to induce the Jews to accept the unique faith of Jehovah, with its lofty claims and its rigorous restraints. That faith itself, however, had appeared in three forms,—as a popular cult, often degraded to the level of the local religion of heathen neighbors; as a priestly tradition, exact and minute in its performances, but the secret of a caste; and as a subject of prophetic instruction, instinct with moral principles of righteousness and spiritual conceptions of God, but too large and free to be reached by a people of narrow views and low attainments.

With the publication of the law of Ezra, the threefold condition ceased, and henceforth there was but one type of religion for the Jews."

Read through the book of Nehemiah today, in order to get the completed story of this movement.

Almighty God, grant that we may have but one purpose in life, and that the glorifying of thy holy name! May we esteem it better than life, or prosperity, or comfort! Give us a great desire that all men may come to a knowledge of the truth! Help us to honor thee in all our ways! Amen.

Tuesday, 24th. Ezra 1. 1-11.

It seems probable that Cyrus was a Persian, and a member of the Aryan race, though some maintain that we was an Elamite, because he was known as king of Elam. But he was also king of Babylon, and of Sumer and Akkad. The importance of the point lies here: if he were an Elamite he would probably be a polytheist, he would be a Zoroastrian, and therefore tolerant of other religions, and particularly of such a religion as Judaism, with which it had much in common.

Cyrus was a great man. The Greeks speak of his kindly ways, he being known as the father and shepherd of his people. Cicero says he was the most just, wise and amiable of rulers. We gather that Nabonidus, the last of the Babylonian kings, had been pursuing a policy that had alienated his people. He had attempted a policy which has always ended in disaster, namely, interference with the religious beliefs and practices of his subjects. He determined on the concentration of religious practice in Babylon. Now it had been a policy of his predecessors to transplant subject peoples and to leave them unmolested as long as they were law-abiding. Nabonidus reversed the policy, alienated his people, and made himself the more vulnerable to attack.

Cyrus was welcomed to Babylon, and won an easy victory. He at once reversed the policy of Nabonidus, and went even further: he gave permission to the exiled peoples of the Babylonian plains to return to their native lands, to take their gods with them, and even went so far as to direct his people to aid by gifts all such as wished to go but had not the means. It was a broad-minded, daring policy, and the result justified his appreciation of human nature. In the case of the Hebrews only a comparatively few had courage enough and religious consecration enough to brave the adventure. They had no gods to carry, but they had sacred emblems and instruments, and these were collected and generously bestowed upon them.

At one time scholars were inclined to think that this edict was unhistorical, but now, as Davies says, "recently discovered cuneiform inscriptions have taken off the edge of this objection, for in them Cyrus speaks the language of the people he conquered. Thus, when writing for Babylonians he says that the god Marduk had called him to be king, and he ascribed his success in war to the other Babylonian deities, Bel and Nebo. What Cyrus is made to say of Jehovah in Ezra 1. 2 is very strange until we find it, and much else that in the narrative surprises us, matched in inscriptions which have come down to us."

The picture is that of a great and good man belonging to an alien faith aiding those who sought to honor their God by rebuilding their Temple and altars. He seeks to undo the mistakes of those who had heaped contempt on the religious convictions of others. There is no more outrageous thing than to pour ridicule on the reverence and devotion of those whose ways are different from our own.

O God, we thank thee for those servants of thine whom thou hast among all peoples! We thank thee that thy witness reaches to the ends of the world, and everywhere there are humble hearts that wait for thee. Help us to find them and to win them into that service in which we are engaged! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Wednesday, 25th. Ezra 2. 1, 2; 62-70.

These verses will suffice to bring before us the problem of the chapter. First we must remember that these were some poor, laboring folk whom Nebuchadnezzar had left behind when he took the people of Judah captive. These people worked on the land, and could be trusted not to organize themselves against their overlord. They were Jews, they were poor, they had neither the resources nor the initiative to reorganize the Temple worship.

In the next place, the names recorded here may have beeen compiled in Babylon from lists of those who were entitled to be reckoned bona fida Jews. They cover all those who came in the three caravans that returned from Babylon during the centuries covered by these narratives. The majority of the exiles had neither faith, vision, nor resolution enough to undertake the adventure. They stayed in Mesopotamia, and lost their identity. But the families and clans mentioned in this chapter formed a pilgrim host who did not wish to lose their national identity or their religion. Some had preserved their family pedigrees, some had not a clear title, but all had the real essential to be reckoned among the people of God,—they had loyalty, reverence, consecration. And however strict might be the rules, however determined might be Ezra and his lieutenants to have a pure strain, the claims of spiritual purpose could not be ignored. The ecclesiastical mind is prone to rebuke those who do not conform to rules, but the Master rebukes the zealot, and says that he who is not against us is on our side.

The perils of the journey are ignored; the circumstances of the arrival are unrecorded. The pilgrims mentioned are (1) the twelve leaders, (2) the laymen, (3) the Temple officials, (4) those of doubtful Jewish descent, (5) men and women servants.

Our Father, help us to reverence those who gave us our religious traditions, the Bible, the Christian faith, houses of prayer, our civilization! We thank thee for the great tradition of preachers, teachers, missionaries, martyrs, saints, through whom our lives are enriched today. Help us to guard the traditions of godliness! For Christ's sake! Amen.

Thursday, 26th. Ezra 3. 1-7.

The pilgrimage is over, and the exiles have been located in their various districts. Jeshua has set about organizing his priests and Levites, and Zerubbabel has organized the clans and families.

What were the first emotions of the returned exiles? They would be impressed by a sense of the sacredness of the land. They would then realize the hardships and hazards of their undertaking. They had left a rich and fertile and thickly populated country for these rocky heights. They had forsaken beautiful and well established cities for ruined places. They were surrounded by hostile and critical forces. What will they do?

They will pray. This is Jehovah's land. They must have some gathering place, and what more propitious place could they find than the altar? The stones which their fathers had used were still at hand. So they rebuilt the altar in the midst of the ruined Temple, and there they assembled and reorganized their worship. Their feasts at first had to do with events in agriculture, now they take them and ennoble them into something higher and more constant. Impelled by a common impulse they gathered about the rebuilt altar of prayer and sacrifice.

Parker says: "The emphasis must be laid upon the expression 'one man.' There are times when we are struck by individuality: we go into detail, and speak with some critical minuteness about one man's peculiarity and another man's eccentricity. There are other times when we take no heed of the unit, except as it is representative of the sum total: we forget characteristics, points of separation, in the grand consolidation of human beings all intent upon the accomplishment of one purpose or the expression of one holy thought. We need not think of the number being large arithmetically; probably from an arithmetical point of view the number on this occasion was not large; but how many soever were in it, the whole represented but one man,—a solid energy, a glorious and effective unity of strength. Why? They were brought together partly by love and partly by fear. When the altar was set up on this occasion it was the first symbol of defiance to all the surrounding and observing heathen. When we can build altars where we like and how we like, we may soon cease to build altars at all. The danger of the cessation of persecution is the danger of deadly indifference."

O God, teach us how to bear witness in the face of criticism and of indifference! Help us to respond to the challenging needs of the hour! Make us champions of justice, equality, truth and brotherly kindness! May we display the influence of Jesus in the world of today! Amen.

Friday, 27th. Ezra 3. 8-13.

Two years have now passed, and the need of a house of worship asserts itself. The foundations of the former Temple stood, there was much of the masonry still available, and quarries were near. Zerubbabel, as holding the commission of government from Cyrus, and Jeshua, as head of the priests and Levites, made their plans and organized their forces. The Levites from 20 years of age and upwards to 50 were intrusted with the task of supervising the erection of the walls.

The leaders were wise in challenging the people to a great enterprize before their initial impulse had spent its force. The secret of a decaying church can usually be found in the lapse of an ambitious program. These men, few in number, attempted to reproduce what had been considered a great ambition by a wealthy and mighty king in days of great prosperity and power. They challenged industry, free will offerings, skill, organized supervision.

Next to the importance of a great challenge was the spirit with which it was carried forward. Nothing was left to chance. The emotions of the people were stirred. The laying of the foundation was made a matter of national moment. Music such as moves the heart was rehearsed. While the young men gave themselves to a new and great endeavor, the old men whose memories spanned the years since the great captivity wept for joy.

We are too restrained. We know too little of shouting and too little of tears. Religion must recapture the emotions. We have a great heritage and a great task.

O Lord, we thank thee that each of thy servants may know thee as his own God and Father! Thou art the heritage of each generation, thou art the God of the individual. Help us to know and believe in thy lovingkindness and tender mercy! Amen.

Saturday, 28th. Ezra 4. 1-5.

This is an interesting story, and illustrates one of the most important problems of religion. The Samaritans were kinsmen of the Jews, being members of the northern kingdom. Some of them may have re-

turned from exile, some may have been the children of mixed marriages, for when their elders were deported their places were taken by other peoples sent from northern provinces to take their places. These people claimed to be as sincere worshipers of Jehovah as the returned exiles, and asked to be allowed to participate in the work of rebuilding the Temple. The exiles were determined to keep themselves apart. They would not have anything to do with those who had remained in the land, nor with those who had returned at other times. This led to criticism, to hostility, to political action in opposition to their policy. They secured influence in the Persian court, and resorted to what we call lobbying. It was a dangerous situation, and led to discouragement, and ultimately to a cessation of work.

Were Zerubbabel and Jeshua well advised in their attitude? It will be noted that they evaded the basis of the plea presented to them. They did not flatly refuse, but tried to say that as they alone were commissioned by Cyrus they felt personally responsible for the work. As a matter of fact, they were refusing to recognize the identity of worship and the claim of relationship. Why? Some think it was due to fanaticism, that they were selfish. Is there no other explanation? I think they doubted the purity of motive behind the appeal. The northern kingdom worshiped Jehovah, but it had always shown a proneness to worship other gods, and it was very susceptible to Phœnician culture. Zerubbabel and Jeshua were afraid of compromise, and also of patronage. They had come on a special mission, they felt deeply the significance of their task, they believed that the suggestion involved a compromise between the Temple of God and idols.

It is a problem worth considering. In these days men are seeking compromises, pleading for union between various elements in the church. Anything that will bring the church into union is good, but you cannot unite light and darkness. The church is vastly different from an institution. It is an organism. Its elements share a common life, and are characterized by a personal loyalty to Christ. Any obscuring or belittling of this fact is dangerous. Advocates of church union need to shift their ground. Methods of ordaining clergymen or of administering ordinances are puerile questions. "Christ our life" is the only basis of an adequate discussion.

Our God and Father, help us to guard ourselves from mixed motives! May our associations be with those who have been quickened by thy Spirit! Teach us to discriminate between truth and falsehood! Make us loyal to our Lord! Amen.

Sunday, 29th. Ezra 4. 6-24.

The passage before us presents certain difficulties, and most commentators think it has slipped out of its proper setting, or that it is a long parenthesis. It refers to other kings, and deals with other matters. Some scholars say it should be read between Ezra 10 and Nehemiah 1. Davies says, "The sad condition of Jerusalem and its inhabitants which Nehemiah 1. 3 implies seems to be that which followed upon the royal edict in Ezra 4. 21, ff. The surprise and grief of Nehemiah on hearing the report of Hanani his brother must have been due not to his hearing for the first time of the royal edict,—of that he could not but have had knowledge,—but to his hearing of the cruel way in which the edict was carried out. It was of some such calamity that Nehemiah heard."

The reasons for thinking this passage out of place are (1) a difference in language and theme, for this passage deals not with the Temple but with the walls of the city, (2) the fact that Cyrus was succeeded by Cambyses, whereas the text speaks of Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes, and elsewhere these men are spoken of as successors of Darius, Ahasuerus being Xerxes, and his successor Artaxerxes I.

Adeney says: "The chronicler must have inserted this section out of its order for some reason of his own. Probably he desired to accentuate the impression of the malignant and persistent enmity of the colonists, and with this end in view described the later acts of antagonism directly after mentioning the first outbreak of opposition. It is just possible that he perceived the unfavorable character of his picture of the Jews in their curt refusal of assistance from their neighbors, and that he desired to balance this by an accumulation of weighty indictments against the people whom the Jews had treated so ungraciously."

There seem to have been three formal complaints registered against the Jews, the list of which is recorded in these verses. If we are right in our surmise as to dates, we see that the feud had lasted for years, that those who had been so curtly refused had cherished the keenest resentment for two generations. They believed that the Jews were aggressive, and looked upon themselves as having a royal decree to become overlords. The result of the opposition was that (first) the Jews ceased building the Temple, and (second) were prohibited from building the walls. No wonder they were disappointed and discouraged! Yet there were other forces at work, otherwise opposition would have but fed the fires of enthusiasm. What these forces were we shall discover.

O God, guard us from discouragement! When criticized and opposed may we seek refuge in thee! Teach us the source of our weakness, and help us to avoid it! Sustain us by thy power! Give us more love for thee, more power for thy work! Amen.

Monday, 30th. Ezra 5.

The foundation of the Temple was laid in 536 B. C. The work was stopped until the second year of Darius, 520 B. C.

What led to the revived interest in the Temple? Meyer suggests that it was the dawning of Messianic hope. Prophecy was being fulfilled. The kingdom of Darius was being torn asunder. There was a shaking of the nations. Celestial signs were appearing. Why should not the kingdom come with Zerubbabel as king?

What wonderful things happen whereever the church has its eyes open to behold the glory of the coming of the Lord! When we hope we become enthusiasts.

Haggai and Zechariah were remarkable men. We know nothing of the personal history of Haggai: we judge the man by his message. Was he a returned exile? His prophecies bear no trace of it. Was he one of those who had remained in the land? He was not a young man. He may have fled with his parents, and when the war was over, returned to Judea, or he may have been born soon after his parents returned. Whatever his origin his word was mighty, and prevailed. His special message is not one in denunciation of idolatry, but of secularism. As G. A. Smith says, the Jews were too sodden with adversity, and too weighted with the care of their own substance, to spring at higher interests. What immediately precedes our prophets is a miserable story of barren seasons and little income, money leaking fast away, and every man's sordid heart engrossed with his own household. It was to such people that the fiery tongue of Haggai brought quickening and resolve.

Zechariah was a young man. He may have been a returned exile, and a man of a priestly family. His words may have supplemented those of Haggai. His personality is to be discovered from his writings. "Loyalty to the great voices of old, the temper which appeals to the experience rather than to the dogmas of the past, the gift of plain speech to his own times, a wistful anxiety about his reception as a prophet, combined with the absence of all ambition to be original or anything but the clear voice of the lessons of the past and the conscience of today,—these are the qualities which characterize Zechariah's orations to the people."

Opposition and questioning came, but criticism was not allowed to disarm effort. The preacher is, after all, the most powerful man in the nation. He through whom the Lord speaks is the inspirer of ideals, and of great and laudable enterprizes. So while messengers were going to learn the will of Darius, the workmen were busy with their task, and four years later it was brought to a glorious completion.

Our Father, we thank thee for the hope that maketh not ashamed! When we believe that the victory of faith is assured we can do exploits. Open our eyes to see the glory of the coming day! Give us high courage to work for it! Amen.

Tuesday, 31st. Ezra 6.

First, we may rest assured that we are dealing with actual history. We know that the Persians had archives in various cities, and that it was customary in times of stress to move documents from one city to another. In the next place, we know that religious tolerance and the furtherance of religious practices of subject people were part of the fixed policy of Darius. He is known to have rebuked governors who interfered with the religious beliefs and practices of others. He was a king who gave generously to temple building in various parts of his dominions. So here we find that both Cyrus and Darius were interested in the plans of the Temple, and that the work should be carried out in a worthy manner. The edict commands that part of the taxes of the community shall be devoted to this purpose. Not only does Darius command that money shall be granted for building purposes, but also for the provision of sacrifices. And he enjoins that those who worship there shall remember to pray for him and his sons.

The decree works magically among those who had sent the inquiry, and also among those who were building the Temple. But far more than royal clemency were the inspiration and confidence engendered by the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah. There is no motive so stimulating as spiritual consecration. In the day of achievement old and forgotten words and phrases were recovered. The happy builders no longer think of themselves as Jews, but speak of "the children of Israel": they remember the great and glorious days of old. We escape our national and denominational barriers when the joy of spiritual achievement floods our being. The keynote of the dedication is joy, an experience that is born in the soul.

And what about those who had not been in exile? These were now greeted as brethren. Fidelity, separateness from life's defilements, devotion to Jehovah, were regarded as sufficient tokens for admission into the fellowship. We forget our official barriers in the days of rich experience. We need more religion rather than more statesmanship for the solution of the problems of the modern church.

Dear Lord and Father, grant that thy spirit may be poured upon all who seek to do thy work! Help us to know that it is not by might, nor by power, but by thy Spirit that true work is done! May we realize the constraint of a great desire to glorify thy name! Amen.